

ANNE GREY.

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ANNE GREY

A NOVEL.

EDITED BY THE AUTHOR OF "GRANBY."

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IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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BY THE EDITOR.

APPEARING as "Editor" I will briefly explain what that word is, and is not, here intended to imply. It does *not* imply that I originally suggested, or have participated, in the composition of the following novel. It implies nothing that can detract from whatever credit is due to the writer for originality in

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design or success in execution. It implies only my cordial approbation of these volumes—that I incur with pleasure the pains and penalties of literary sponsorship, and that, while the writer is pleased to remain unknown, I am glad to perform the office of introduction under a name which has already claimed the indulgence of the public several times.

I am permitted to state that this is a first publication, and that it is the work of a female hand. Neither of these circumstances do I mention with a view to deprecate criticism. I mention them rather as claims upon the attention and interest of the reader; for from a mind of which the

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stores are yet undivulged, originality may most reasonably be expected ; and female novelists have been so frequently successful, that the fact that these pictures of modern life have proceeded solely from a female hand may be justly regarded as a recommendation. By many, perhaps, the latter announcement will be deemed superfluous ; and the feminine tone and character of the work may produce in the reader that same conviction which we should entertain after the perusal of many of the writings of Mrs. Inchbald, and Mrs. Opie, and all the novels of Miss Austen—namely, that they could not have been written by a man. To comment upon this work is not my

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purpose ; and I now resign it with confidence to the judgment of those who can appreciate delicacy and fidelity in the delineation of character, and in the analysis of feeling.

Sept. 15th, 1834.

A N N E G R E Y.

CHAPTER I.

MR. and MRS. GREY were good sort of people. Mr. Grey was a middle aged man, neither tall nor short; sensible, though not clever, and in all respects as little remarkable as others of the numerous class of good sort of men, who are allowed to know quite as much and a little more than their neighbours.

He married a woman in every way inferior to himself. She was less well born, less well bred, a good deal less sensible, and decidedly a great deal more of a good sort of person. Mr. Grey might, or might not be aware of her inferiority ; if he was, the world knew nothing of it, for he seemed perfectly contented, and never fidgetted out of the room when his wife's vulgar relations came to see him, or coloured up with a virtuous sense of mortified superiority when Mrs. Grey appeared rather *unsuperior* in the presence of his own better connexions.

It was evident that Mr. and Mrs. Grey went on well together ;—not exactly as a cat and a dog will do, who have been taught by the habits of companionship the one to beware of sharp claws, the other of the snap of her canine friend's sharp teeth ; but really without any consciousness that they were not meant for each others' society. Mr. Grey looked on his

wife as “ Mrs. Grey,” and Mrs. Grey looked on her husband as “ Mr. Grey,” and that Mr. and Mrs. Grey should not be the two people in the world best suited to one another never seemed to enter the minds of either of them.

Of Mrs. Grey, as she is not my heroine, I need not say that she was above or below the middle height, that she had dark expressive eyes, or bright blue sparkling ones. She is not my heroine—but, as the mother of my heroine, she must be described. Not the tall, austere, romantically cruel mother. Alas! Mrs. Grey was not this! What is to be done, then, for a description? Mrs. Grey was only a good sort of woman. She was kind-hearted—well intentioned—but had no superfluity of feeling. She had no sentiment—never wept at imaginary ills—loved her husband, as I said, because he was “ Mr. Grey,” and she was “ Mrs. Grey”—loved her children because they were Mr. and

Mrs. Grey's children, and were Masters and Misses Grey—cried when her first child cut his first tooth in safety, and ever after shed a few tears on all other proper occasions of the same kind. She was not a literary woman ; but she was well read in the *Whole Duty of Man*, *Family Lectures*, and *Doddridge's Family Expositor* ; got through *Boswell's Life of Johnson* once in every year ; *Sir Charles Grandison*, *Cecilia*, and the *Vicar of Wakefield* in the course of two, and shed the same number of tears over each as were shed on all other proper occasions in the family, such as tooth-cutting, &c.

She made a point of reading a paper of the *Spectator* aloud every day to her girls as they sat at their work ; and as it was all the *Spectator*, and the *Spectator* was written by a very good man (she never could understand that it was not all written by the same person), nothing

would have made her believe that every paper was not likely to be beneficial to her girls from the ages of ten to sixteen ; so, much to the edification of her daughters, the Spectator took its round, and regularly each day did Mrs. Grey open at the place where her next paper mark was left, and as regularly did she read through the various delinquencies of its various dramatic personæ, and duly move the mark to the end of the paper, fully impressed with the idea of the good which her daughters must have gained from listening to it.

Mr. and Mrs. Grey's family consisted of two sons, and two daughters. The eldest son William was a bit of a despot. It was lucky that he possessed a good disposition, for he was his mother's darling, and his will and pleasure guided every other person's in the house, not excepting Mr. Grey's. Perhaps the latter would scarcely have owned it : but where is the good

quiet man who will not give up a little of his own authority to ensure peace in a house? Henry, the second son, and the youngest of the family, was a good-hearted, spirited boy, who loved mother, father, brother, and sisters, and sometimes plagued all of them, excepting his father and brother; the one, because he respected as well as loved him too sincerely, the other, because, though he loved him less, he saw that William resented too seriously any infringement of his will; and Henry, like his father, loved peace in a house.

Sophy, the eldest girl, was pretty and lively; just tall enough to be called tall by short people, and of a moderate height by tall ones; just accomplished enough to give her a name for accomplishments amongst those who had not any themselves, and sufficiently so to keep her place with their more decided possessors: good-tempered, good-hearted, and altogether

a very nice girl, just beyond the line of common-place stupid misses; inheriting a large share of Mrs. Grey's youthful beauty, and thinking a very little better of herself than she deserved.

Ah, well! It is all the better when it can be so! It saves many sinking hearts, and blushing faces, and tears at home; and keeps up wonderfully the stock of family spirits; for how much more conversible and agreeable will the girl be who comes out of society with a comfortable impression of herself! She will love her sisters, think with twice as much respect and affection of her parents, and be very good-natured to younger brothers; and even so was Sophy Grey!

Anne, the second girl, was a year and two months younger than Sophy. If Anne was pretty she did know it. If Anne was clever she did not know it. If Anne was the sweetest

tempered of all human beings she did not know it. She was little Anne Grey whom every one loved in and out of her own family, when they had time for it.

Meanwhile Anne was a kind of family drudge. William vented his tyranny and ill-humour upon her, laughed when he made her blush, or cry, and said "what a queer little thing" Anne was; though he loved her, after all, and allowed, not unfrequently, that she was the best of the set, and the best tempered little simpleton he ever knew. Henry made her his play-fellow, and the butt of all his good practical jokes, but he loved her with all his heart, and could never be happy in holiday times but when Anne could be with him, and hear of his school exploits; and always said, as he covered her little delicate face with kisses, after every boisterous joke that had annoyed or frightened her, that he really believed there was not another such a

darling, good-natured girl in England, and he declared, that they might talk of Sophy being a beauty, and ‘all that;’ “but never mind Anne, you will marry a Lord or a Duke some of these days, or some fine fellow when he sees how well you can put up with his playing you tricks.”

As Anne grew up and came out, Harry’s practical jokes diminished, though not his love for Anne, who, he declared, really looked very pretty at times. To be sure it was a monstrous bore that she should be going out, and dressing smart, instead of romping with him; but the time would come when he should go out with Anne too, and take care that those tall black-looking Miss Dashwoods did not frighten her, or old Mrs. Morton make her sing when she was not inclined.

Mrs. Grey thought of Anne as a good quiet child who never grew up into a woman. She

thought her very shy, and very useful to go on messages for William, or ring the bell for the whole family, whenever it was required to be rung for the service of one or all of them. Mr. Grey loved Anne whenever he could think much of her, and always gave her a pat on the back or a kiss when it came in the way to do so, and called her his good little Anne. Sophy was fond of her and entrusted her secrets to her, but never could hear any in return; and Anne would never have thought of trying to force any upon her. Sophy thought of herself as “Miss Grey,” and of Anne as her good little sister who might get on very well as belonging to her.

And now will this do for a heroine! Anne Grey, how would you have blushed, how would you have looked at Sophy, had you been told that you, and not Sophy, were to be my heroine? Putting Sophy out of the question, that *you* on

any grounds were to be a heroine! and yet, Anne Grey, so it is; for mine is a quiet, common-place story, requiring a quiet, common-place heroine; and perhaps your gentle voice, your soft blue eyes, and your slight gliding figure;—but Heaven defend us from voices, eyes, and gliding gracefulness! we will speak no more of it:—but let us listen to Lady Downton.

CHAPTER II.

“WELL, Sophy, my dear love, I am quite charmed to see you. Ah! Anne too—I am so glad to see you both! but I really am tired to death. I have had such a day! My sweet Sophy, pity me! First in came, just when I had settled to my work, in came Mr. Thorpe. Oh! that man. He is a great bore. I always thought he was—but you know he is so kind! and though I really felt so ill, and Dr. Bray”—in a lower voice “actually told me there would be danger in my over-exerting myself”—(Anne

Grey looked very sorry. Sophy forgot to do so) “ Yet I could not help——and do you know,” in an animated tone, quite forgetting the danger of over-exertion which had seemed so imminent——“ he told me such a piece of news ! what do you think ? we are going at last to have Chatterton taken. A family have been to look at it——have actually spoken to Turner about it, and Mr. Thorpe saw a letter from Mr. Aston’s daughters’ greatest friend saying—I forget exactly, but it was something about places being taken after remaining long untenanted, just after an allusion to the Astons, and this coming with the account of Turner being applied to—It really will be charming ! They do not know who the people are.”

“ I shall be very glad,” said Sophy, “ if we have some neighbours there ; but I do not think I will let myself believe any one is coming till they are actually settled there.”

“ Ah ! very true, my dear—you are a sweet girl ; but I am so fatigued ! ” the invalid voice was come again. “ Could you have believed it ? the slight exertion of seeing you has quite overcome me ! ”

“ I am very sorry,” said Anne. “ Perhaps Sophy, as mamma intended meeting us on our way back—and I am afraid we are tiring Lady Downton——”

“ Ah, my dear, you are so kind !—but I feel better now, and I assure you it does me good to have you here. I envy you your health—but Sophy, have not you any thing to tell me ?—No amusement for your poor sick friend ? ” in a very tender voice, and with a very sickly smile. “ I know Mr. Grey does not love gossip, but I hate it so much that you need not be afraid of doing any harm by talking to me. I never repeat things—indeed I dislike the trouble ; but cut out as I am from all pleasures, my life

would be a melancholy thing but for the conversation of friends."

"I wish I had anything to tell you," said Sophy, with a smile that was not perhaps caused by pleasure.

Lady Dowton was what is called an excellent neighbour to the Greys; that is, she was near enough for a walk to bring them together. She liked to have the Miss Greys come to talk to her, professed great friendship for all the family, and, as in the case with all other good neighbours, never thought it necessary to do more than profess. She always called girls "sweet loves," and told them how charmingly they looked. She played at "invalid"—no one knew exactly why, except that as she was indolent, and her husband, a good John Bull sort of man, was always employed either in hunting, shooting, or farming, and as they had no family, poor Lady Dowton had nothing to amuse her-

self with but being always a little ill. Nothing else would have kept her alive. She must have died of ennui, if she had not been constantly saved, by Dr. Bray telling her she was on the point of death. When "invalid" and Dr. Bray failed, then came gossip—and between playing "invalid," and gossiping in good earnest, Lady Dowton was kept alive—we will not say as many years as Sir John wished—for it would be hard to tell what that period would have been. But Lady Dowton did live a great many years, and as Sir John hunted, shot, and farmed the same number, so did she continue to be a poor sick friend to the Greys, and an active scandal-monger all the days of those numerous years.

Lady Dowton loved to have some one to talk to, to hear how ill Dr. Bray thought her. She was always tired to death with the first few minutes of seeing any one, and so ill that she

could scarcely bear the effort of shaking hands, and always twice as weak and delicate, when any one talked without retailing scandal, or did not quite believe her own.

“I am afraid I have very little by way of news to tell you,” said Sophy. “The only news of any interest that I know is that Maria Pemberton is going to be married.”

“No really ! Is that true,” said Lady Downton, actually half-raising herself from her languid position on the sofa. “Who is it to ? that ugly girl ! It must have been a take-in ! I am sure the man could not like her ! But who is it, my sweet Sophy ? I am dying to know.”

“No other than Mr. Barton—Fred. Barton—and I really believe he is going to marry for love, and has been a long time attached to Maria ; but there have not been the means till his aunt died, who has left him all her fortune ; and Mrs. Fred. Barton is to be a rich woman.”

“No, you don’t say so!”

“I am very glad,” continued Sophy. “I always liked her; she is so good-humoured, though she is very plain.”

“Oh! as for that!”—Lady Dowton held up her hands. “It is plainness to a degree—Well, I am very glad of it! And where do they mean to live? and what do they do with the mother? I did hear—but don’t repeat it—I may trust you, you know, my dear Sophy—I did hear,” speaking almost in a whisper, “that poor Mrs. Pemberton’s temper is so bad that Maria vowed she could not, and would not, live with her any longer; and this proves it! And you know it is said that unhappy Mr. Pemberton’s death was owing to a violent quarrel he had with Mrs. Pemberton.”

Sophy actually laughed. “Nay, my dear Lady Dowton, do not say that, for poor Mr. Pemberton had been dying of gout for the last five years, and never in all that time saw Mrs.

Pemberton or his daughter for an hour together without scolding them both into silence. I do not see how her temper could have had such an effect upon his nerves : and as for Maria, she doats upon her mother, whose only fault towards her is, if any, humouring her a little too much. So we will let Maria Pemberton marry Mr. Barton, without finding any other reason for it than that they are attached to one another."

"Aye, my sweet Sophy ! I love to see you so happy and cheerful—but my poor weak frame—I cannot always look on the bright side of things—I feel now quite overcome," sinking back with the fatigue of not being agreed with as to badness of Mrs. Pemberton's temper. Lady Dowton was sent back to the resource of being an invalid. Happy woman ! to have two strings to her bow.

But a new thought struck her. Lady Dowton, though she had no other occupation in the

world, did occupy herself meritoriously in one thing—in writing letters : and will it be believed, or rather will it not be believed, spite of her assurance that she hated gossip, that Lady Dowton's letters were full of gossip—some might say—of scandal ! and written for no other purpose than to retail the newest bit of news with the finest possible gloss cast over it ; so that if she told of a marriage, it was sure to be known at the same time that “ there were some unpleasant circumstances about it—that the gentleman had been carrying on an affair elsewhere, but that a fierce Irishman of a brother had carried the point sword in hand ”—but who would copy Lady Dowton's letter ? Suffice it to say that it was near post time—Maria Pemberton was going to be well married, and she was a very ugly girl—Lady Dowton was so ill that she would not keep Sophy and Anne any longer, and she knew they must wish to be going to dear Mrs.

Grey—so “good bye, Sophy! how charming you look! good bye, dear Anne,” and the Miss Greys walked home.

That day, had the post been way-laid, there might have been seen in one of those many letters in a female hand, “Maria Pemberton is going to marry Fred. Barton; and it seems, from what has been said at various times, that there has been some little manœuvre to bring it about; but you perhaps may not have heard the *shocking* reason for the poor girl accepting a man she never could love—which is the vile temper of her mother, who, I have heard, actually at times threatened to send her out of the house. I am writing confidentially, my dear Miss Lightfoot, and I would not for the world——” What farther Lady Dowton’s letter contained is not known; but never mind!—we will walk home with the Miss Greys.

They were both thinking on rather different

subjects. Anne had been shocked by Lady Dowton's manner of speaking of the Pembertons, whom she really liked. She also remembered Mr. Barton with pleasure, for he had once saved her at a ball from the honour of dancing with a satirical-looking man, whom some one introduced to her. She therefore did not like hearing them abused—But after all where were the people that Anne Grey would have liked to have heard abused ?

Sophy meantime was wondering whether it was really true that Chatterton was going to be tenanted, and what kind of people the tenants would be. She had some little vision of an agreeable eldest son, who would look at Sophy Grey, and look and love, and decide that no one was half so charming in the whole neighbourhood. A pleasing sister he might have, who should call her 'dear Sophy,' and dress after her, and still be a very agreeable, and pretty

girl, whom every one would like just a degree less than herself. The parents should be pleasant. What a charming vision did she conjure up! Ah! that reality should ever, with its frosty hand, blacken the brightness of day-dreams like this of eldest sons with ten thousand a year, and declarations of love, and *trousséaux*, and honeymoons!

“Do you think it is true about Chatterton, Anne?” said Sophy at last.

“Oh yes! I had forgotten. I dare say it is.”

“I wonder whether papa will visit them,” rejoined Sophy. “It will be so agreeable to have pleasant neighbours there. I should like to know whether it is true.”

“We shall soon know, I dare say,” said Anne; “but we have so many neighbours already, that I cannot care about any new ones.”

“I must say I like new people,” said Sophy.

“ I like to be seen. I do not prefer,” added she laughing, “ to blush unseen, and waste all the beauties, Captain Herbert talks about, on the desert air.”

“ No—true, Sophy dear. I would not have your beauty left to bloom unseen. I do hope for your sake, that the house at Chatterton may be well filled with young and old—the gayest of the gay, if you wish it. There might be father and mother, one daughter perhaps, and one, two, three, or even four sons ; and all to talk and laugh and dance with you and admire you just as much as Captain Herbert does.”

“ There’s a good Anne ! You are really the best natured sister in the world, and there shall be one of the two, three, or four sons left to your care ! ”

“ Thank you, Sophy,” said Anne, in that quietest of all tones which is used only when the subject spoken of has ceased to interest,

and when voice and attention drop at once in placidity.

On reaching home they found that Mrs. Grey had been waiting for them, had really had on her bonnet, fidgetted about to wonder what they could be doing; told Mr. Grey that that tiresome Lady Dowton always kept the girls half the morning; had asked him to have his dinner an hour later, because she was sure all their morning would be lost; and they had to go and see poor old Betty Wood; and Mr. Grey had consented with a sort of grumble to a thing he hated, just to prevent Mrs. Grey from talking so much when he was more than head and shoulders deep in a new book.

Luckily for Mr. and Mrs. Grey's temper the servant came in with two notes of invitation. Happy Mrs. Grey! she then had something to do, and forgot her daughters.

“My dear, here is an invitation from Had-

ley for a few days—‘Ever yours’ sincerely, A. H. Hadley’—what a pretty hand she writes! You will go, of course. I had been hoping that Lady Hadley would ask us. Very civil indeed! And Sophy never looked so well, and she has just got her new dress from town.”

“I am glad of it,” said Mr. Grey, “we will certainly go. This leaving home for a night or two is a terrible affair; but, however, for the sake of the children, one must make a little sacrifice. You take Anne, my dear—they ask her, do not they?”

“Oh! I don’t know. I never thought of taking Anne—Yes—your daughters—that certainly is an “s”——Well, we might take her; but she is so shy!”

“It is better that she should go out, and get rid of the shyness,” said Mr. Grey. “Anne is growing very pretty.”

“Yes, yes,” rejoined Mrs. Grey, in a sort of

bustling, cast-off manner, for Sophy was in her mind just then.

“ And Anne’s singing, when she is not too much frightened, is the prettiest thing I ever heard,” said persevering Mr. Grey.

“ Well then, I will write, shall I, and say we accept their invitation,” said Mrs. Grey.

“ Yes, certainly, my dear,” and Mr. Grey was deep in his book again, and perhaps giving one corner of his attention to the blissful idea that Mrs. Grey was occupied for the next quarter of an hour.

The invitation to Hadley was a great pleasure to Mrs. Grey, and she was in her heart more delighted than she quite liked saying, for it was not dignified for old Mrs. Grey to be in a wild, girl-like delight. It was also a satisfaction to Mr. Grey. Lord and Lady Hadley were agreeable people, and had an excellent house ; but the pleasure of an invitation to Hadley was

greatly enhanced by Lord and Hadley being known to be rather exclusive. Mr. Grey had a little pride in being liked by persons who were so—perhaps it was a weakness—but still it was natural. He was a man of refined mind, and was not rich enough to go yearly to London—he could therefore only enjoy such society as a country neighbourhood afforded; and it was natural he should prefer such houses as gave him the opportunity of meeting with those whose manners and mind best accorded with his own.

Mr. Grey had no vulgar love of rank or fashion, but he knew that those in high station have it most in their power to collect around them all the gems of England's sons and daughters, and fathers and mothers, and to select, as their guests, the clever, the agreeable, the well-informed of all classes. Mr. Grey therefore liked an invitation to Hadley; and

if the company fell short of his expectations he could turn with enjoyment to the choice pictures—the extensive library—the beautiful gardens, and the rare exotics, which the union of wealth and taste had collected together.

“No end of invitations, my dear,” said Mrs. Grey, as poor Mr. Grey, having just resumed the train of his reading, had forgotten Hadley. “Here we are all asked to an archery at the Gilberts’—this day fortnight—that is long enough off! I think we had better go. I dare say every one will be there, and it will be pleasant for the girls.”

“Certainly, my dear,” and Mr. Grey tried to think with pleasure of an archery, and to read again; but good Mrs. Grey would not be satisfied with “Certainly, my dear.”

“Well then, Mr. Grey, do attend a little. Shall we go or not? I am sure I don’t know whether we ought. It’s well if the horses are

not laid up, and then there would be the expense of posters, and William has been so extravagant this year."

"Well, my dear," said poor Mr. Grey, "just as you like."

Mrs. Grey was determined, surely, that morning to be provoking. "Just as I like! Mr. Grey! Why you know I am trying to think what is for the best, and I want your opinion. It is of very little use saying 'just what I like.' I want to decide what I do like!"

"Ah, very true," said good, patient Mr. Grey. "I think we may as well go, and you will write the note perhaps—and—I am rather busy now with this new book, so, my dear, if you have nothing very particular to say—"

Mrs. Grey walked off muttering something about "always the way," and "very difficult to know what to do." In short she was not in

a very good humour. I used to be told at times, when a child, that I had got up on the wrong side. I do not know exactly to this day what the nurse meant, but I knew the result; and this must have been the case with Mrs. Grey.

This is a conjugal dialogue between two excellent people, who really loved one another. Does any one think it unnatural? and if it is not unnatural, will it deter any young lady from entering into the blissful state of matrimony? I hope not.

Sophy and Anne came in—(they had no idea of not marrying because they listened every now and then to such conjugal dialogues). They came just to relieve Mrs. Grey of her remaining bit of ill-humour.

“Well, girls, here are two invitations. I had been waiting half an hour for you, and then these came, and I have had such a difficulty in deciding how to accept them, as you were so long

in coming. What could have kept you? One is from Hadley."

"Hadley!" exclaimed Sophy—her eyes brightening.

"Aye, I thought you would be pleased," said Mrs. Grey, all her natural good humour come again; "and we have accepted it: and here is another to an archery at the Gilberts'."

"Hadley and an archery!" said Sophia, jumping round with a joyful bound. "How charming! Dear papa!" giving him a kiss on his forehead as he read, and the patient man smiled and actually looked pleased.

CHAPTER III.

Is it dignified in a heroine to be pleased when she is invited to a country house, and to an archery meeting ?

Luckily, Anne Grey, dignified or not, you will not incur censure on that account ! Anne tried to be glad because her sister was glad ; but it was rather difficult not to be sorry. Society had little pleasure for her, she felt so shy. She lost the time for her home pursuits—for her music, her drawing—and above all, her read-

ing; and she gained only a feeling of being the shyest girl in England, and of sitting in positive misery during several hours, in the fear that some one would be so mistaken as to think she might be agreeable, and try to talk to her.

It would not have been so bad had not she known that in such a case her mother would have looked reproachfully at her, to make her talk in return, or her father perhaps would have said afterwards, “Why did not you try to be less shy, my little Anne, and let us hear the sound of your voice? You should learn to think better of yourself, and remember we go into society for the sake of others as well as of ourselves.”—If it had not been for all this, which Anne felt to be very true, she would have relied on her own freezing monosyllables to have ensured her peace in society.

Anne, however, soon forgot her shyness sufficiently to feel happy in society. It would

have been ungrateful had she not, and never was there a being less chargeable with the sin of ingratitude. She overflowed with gratefulness for the smallest favour, but modesty and timidity often forbade her from shewing the extent of it, whilst it dwelt unrestrained in her heart.

Had timidity not checked the excessive expression of obligation, good taste would have done so. Anne had the most thorough good taste that ever being was possessed of. It existed in every thing—I was going to say it shone forth—but that is not an applicable term.—None of her attainments, none of her virtues, could be said to shine forth—her modesty forbade it. Still a perfect taste and elegance existed in every thing, whether in her singing, her drawing, her dancing, her dress, her choice of books, or her kindness and attention to others; all was in good taste.

No sooner had the notes been despatched, than a ring at the door-bell announced a visitor ; no uncommon thing at the Greys', who were placed in what is called a good neighbourhood.

Whether a good neighbourhood may be called *a good* is doubtful. One of its principal charms consists in the certainty of uncertainty, as to whether, when you have settled to your morning occupation, you are to be disturbed in it for so many half hours : whether your drawing is to go peaceably through its number of bright effects, and improving washes ; or to be brought suddenly to a sharp edge, or a scramble, by the entrance of a visitor—your bright idea sent away—your drawing dried up into a cylinder by the agreeableness of Mrs. or Miss —s ; or your book thrown aside, and sent out of train—your work—your music—all at the mercy of any one who makes a part of the good neighbourhood, and who go through

the most wearisome of all things, a morning visit, you know, with the same long sufferance as yourself, and have to appear, with yourself, quite charmed to find you at home.

Then those other days, when, the carriage ordered, the work, the book, the drawing, laid aside ; the flower-garden, gay and tempting in the sun, deserted ; card case in hand, best bonnet on, a frown in the heart, and a smile on the face, you sally forth to the enjoyment of so many miles of dusty road, to the sight of entrance halls, and to the sound of door bells—to the breathless hope for a ‘not at home,’ and the ‘at home’ which you hear : or if ‘not at home,’ and your hope is realized (happiness beyond compare !) to have had this sight of the outside of houses, this rumble along dusty roads, to assure your good neighbours that you have returned their bore, and mean to be civil, and are not offended !

Thus, then, the “good,” in a good neighbourhood, does not mean the same thing as other goods. Mrs. Grey felt it so, as she exclaimed in the bitterness of her heart, “How provoking! I shall lose all my walk to-day!” and Mr. Grey felt it so, when, for the fourth time, he resigned his book with a sigh; then on second thoughts seized it, and, as softly as gentlemen’s boots would allow, crept at a side door out of the room. Just in time, Mr. Grey! The door opened, and Mrs. Dobson was announced.

It has been said that Mrs. Grey had some vulgar relations. Mrs. Dodson was Mrs. Grey’s first cousin. She lived not far from Weston—had lost her husband about five years back—had gone through the proper stages of inconsolable affliction, and had entered with vast pleasure into the enjoyment of the good things which poor dear Mr. Dodson had left behind him.

Mr. Dodson had been in trade. He was consequently very rich, and a rosy, fat, bustling, snub-nosed, little man—that is what one should say in a novel of a man who had made his money by trade, and who was to be the vulgar, laughable character of the book; but poor Mr. Dodson is dead—so he cannot be made more useful than by having left to his wife the means wherewith to be rich and vulgar, and one son to tread in the steps of his father.

Mrs. Dodson was not only fat, but vulgar. It was vulgarity not of person alone, though in that she was pre-eminent, but vulgarity of mind. She thought highly of herself—highly of her son—highly of her thousands a year—her house on which thousands had been expended—her garden—her hot-houses, pineries, conservatories,—all the many good things which money can give—but she thought still more highly of every man, woman, or child, to whose name

was appended those pleasing little fascinating words, Lord, Lady, Viscount, Earl, Marquis or Duke. Highly she thought of every one whom she could mention as a “very fashionable person.” Great people were Mrs. Dodson’s idols, to whom she bowed—not gracefully—*that* she could not do ! her figure forbad ! but she did bow most profoundly in her heart, and set a value on every one, exactly in proportion to the number of the Peerage or of the fashionables whom they could count amongst their acquaintances.

Mrs. Dodson was a good mother, and had been a good wife ; and where kindness was really called for it was always bestowed. But she had at the same time a large fund of envy and ill-will towards those who rose superior to herself in rank, wealth, or fashion. She was pompous, and tried to depreciate others, in extolling herself.

Her only son ‘Bob,’ or ‘Mr. Robert Dodson,’ as he was called, was exactly the person to have been expected from such parents. He was awkward in manners and appearance ; free from any reproach of intellectuality or refinement ; like his mother, not bad-hearted ; but unlike her, he was troubled with *mauvaise honte* to a distressing degree when brought into the presence of those whom an innate sense of something wanting in himself told him were his superiors. He was not so vulgar in externals as his mother. His pomposity did not appear so much—we hardly know, in fact, whether it really existed ; and in person, though he was awkward, he might have passed very well for a stupid, unremarkable young man. Such was the scion of the house of Dodson—and now will he be accepted as my hero ? Mrs. Dodson means to make him such — and what must be done ?

It was Mrs. Dodson's favourite plan to marry her son to one of his 'cousin Greys.' From children it had been a settled thing between Mrs. Dodson and Mrs. Grey that Bobby was to marry Sophy. So when Bobby gave Sophy a kiss, as they played on the floor together, or Sophy cried because cousin Bobby was going away, and took his new toy with him, Mrs. Dodson winked at Mrs. Grey, and Mrs. Grey winked at Mrs. Dodson, and they held up their hands and said 'how wonderful!'

As they grew up, Mrs. Dodson saw that her son was a little wanting in external elegance and in mental attainments; and the doubts, which had at times risen in her mind, whether Bob with his fortune might not have secured a Marquis's or an Earl's daughter for his wife, were sent to rest, by seeing Bob's blushes and hearing his feet shuffling on the carpet, as he sat enduring a morning visit. Still more were

they set at rest by seeing the Greys growing up pretty and accomplished, and the whole family getting into the best society, and counting up more Peerage-Book acquaintances than could be thought of without envy as separated from Bob, but very pleasantly as united to him.

Mrs. Dodson, to do her justice, was really fond of the Greys. She had little jealousies, not a few with Mrs. Grey—but still she really liked her. Mr. Grey was naturally kind-hearted, and so long-suffering towards his wife's relations and their vulgarity, that Mrs. Dodson could always say to herself—‘How very comfortable and sociable Mr. Grey is!’ and as she respected him, so she liked him, for being superior and not shewing any airs of superiority. Sophy and Anne she liked because they were pretty, good tempered girls whom she had known from the cradle upwards. Either of them she felt would do very well for Bob; and her good-

heartedness suggested what a great thing it would be for them to marry such a fortune.

On the Grey side of the question, Mrs. Grey had been so long accustomed to the Dodsons and their vulgarity, that she was not quite aware of its extent. Bob was very harmless, and *very rich*, and Mrs. Dodson always spoke 'so highly of him!'—a proof of his being a good son. Mr. Grey did not think much about him. He was, as may be seen, rather an indolent man, and allowed things to be in a great measure managed for him. He thought Bob Dodson was a good sort of youth, who might make a very good husband, and he felt that if one of his daughters could like him, it would be quite as well that she should marry him. So far Mr. Grey went—but Mrs. Grey and Mrs. Dodson had gone some way farther. They had *almost* settled the wedding dress,

quite the house which Bob was to have (Bagley Hall was to remain in Mrs. Dodson's care till her death), the number of carriages, and the name of the first child. All this time Sophy and Anne knew nothing of this plan against their peace, and all this time Mrs. Dodson and Mrs. Grey kept up a little enlivening spirit of jealousy, which made Mrs. Dodson talk vastly of her riches—her carriages—her hot-houses—her hundred other *et ceteras*,—and Mrs. Grey talk grandly of her titled friends—of Lord Albert *something* being so smitten with Sophy—of Lady *some other* saying that she hoped the Greys would consider her house as their home—and so on.

Now enter Mrs. Dodson! Mrs. Grey, who had been for the last few seconds getting up a smile and a company face, forgot both on seeing that the visitor was no one after all, but her cousin Mrs. Dodson; so she very heartily shook

her by the hand, and told her how glad she was that she was Mrs. Dodson and not any other person — and then, Mrs. Dodson having duly kissed Sophy and Anne, and said—“ Well, I’m so glad to see you, for its an age since I saw you all !” and having taken breath after the exertion of walking into the room, she and Mrs. Grey were seated, and Mrs. Grey had begun to think how soon she could bring in the invitation to Hadley, and Mrs. Dodson, how soon she could speak of having out-bid the Duke of —— for the costly table at —— ; a piece of extravagance by the way that was rather weakening to Bob’s funds, and nothing but the gratification of talking about it could quite silence the risings of conscience and accoupt books in Mrs. Dodson’s mind.

Meanwhile, Sophy and Anne considered themselves at liberty to go or stay as they pleased, so Anne glided off to her harp in the

next room, and Sophy went to look at her new dress from town, and to think whether Captain Herbert would be at the Archery that day fortnight, and whether he would admire her still more in her new dress. Anne's harp was a solace to her, but, unlike Sophy, she had to send Hadley and the Archery to oblivion to render her as happy as usual, though one little pleasant thought arose about Hadley—"I wonder whether we shall meet Mr. Temple there!" A wrong note, Anne Grey! and Anne knew it was, and for five minutes she thought no more about Hadley, or Mr. Temple, or any thing but overcoming a difficult passage in her music, and the next five minutes her whole soul was in one of the most beautiful and touching of ———— airs, which was played with all that expression and feeling which is some reward for the gift of a whole soul—even such a soul as hers.

Who then is Mr. Temple, who could cause one wrong note, and be so easily forgotten when he had caused it? Mr. Temple was a young man whom Anne had met on her only visit to Hadley—on almost the first visit she had ever paid after she came out. Edward Temple was tall, rather handsome and very gentlemanlike. To finish his character, as Mrs. Dodson might have finished it, he was “a prodigiously fine young man, very clever, very satirical, very fashionable, quite of the first fashion, gave himself great airs, and would scarcely speak to any but his own set—but then, if any man had a right to be fastidious, it was certainly Edward Temple, for he was such a remarkably genteel, clever young man—dressed so well—and had such an air—but very quiet—so quiet in his manner and dress,”—that is what Mrs. Dodson would have said.

Such as Edward Temple was, he had been

staying at Hadley during Anne's first visit there, and Anne had liked him—for he had actually spoken to her, and in a way that did not render her more shy, but so as to remove her fears for the moment, and enable her to keep up a conversation of five minutes without any great suffering. She had never again dared to place herself within the possibility of speaking-distance; but he had once, as she could not but observe with surprise and gratitude, saved her from singing, at some little expense of manœuvre to himself, when her distress had been manifested on being called upon for such an exhibition.

This was very good-natured, and, joined to his agreeableness, which she could listen to without any painful effort of boldness when it was not addressed to herself, gave Anne a very favourable impression of him, and made her entertain a slight wish to hear him talk again—not to be talked to. No—Anne actually coloured

up with intuitive bashfulness as she thought of it ; and yet he was so thoroughly well-bred in his manner, and so gentle and quiet, especially to her, that, in spite of his cleverness—his turn for satire—and the way in which he laughed at some people, she really felt less afraid of him than of most others whom she met in society. So Anne thought with pleasure of listening to Mr. Temple at Hadley.

The day arrived—Sophy in high spirits—well-dressed, and knowing she was so—with a most becoming bonnet on, in which she was quite aware that she looked very pretty. Anne, just as well-dressed, and looking the picture of elegant quietude and simplicity, but not in the least aware of looking very pretty, or of any thing but the fluttering of her heart, as they drove through the lodge gates at Hadley, whirled along the level sweep of carriage-road, through the magnificent Park, and stopped at last at the

door under the imposing row of columns, that all seemed turned into eyes to laugh at and abash poor Anne Grey.

Shall I describe the party there, or shall I leave Hadley and its inmates in a sort of vague indistinctness? One way of proceeding might have a grand, romantic, and bewildering effect. The other might subject me to receiving a pretty compliment on my truth of description—on this or that person being ‘so natural!’ Let nature then have her sway—Let the grand sublime be left to nobler minds, and let me once more and for ever be common-place and true—Let me descend to all but to the patterns of the curtains, or the number of cups of coffee drunk by my heroine and her companions. Just down to this, and no lower, let me descend in minuteness.

On getting into the room, and after having sat there about ten minutes, Anne found that

Hadley was not so much a matter of palpitations at the heart as she had expected. Lady Hadley and Miss Trevor were the only persons in the room on their arrival. Lady Hadley was between thirty and forty, tall, rather pretty, and very pleasing; possessed of rather a distinguished air,—just that kind of air which would render it impossible to mistake her for a milliner, milliner's apprentice, or lady's maid, wherever she might be seen. Amiable, sensible, and tolerably clever, she had nothing more remarkable about her, but that she was apt to take likings and form friendships, which were not doomed to decay after the first effervescence of feeling was over—which were neither brought to an abrupt conclusion, nor kept lingering on to a natural death; neither to the slow decline, nor the galloping consumption of friendly feeling. Lady Hadley's likings and friendships lasted as long as they were deserved, or were called for, or prized by the objects.

Lady Hadley may therefore safely be called a remarkable woman.

Miss Trevor, the other person in the room on their arrival, was a lively, active old maid,—a person who did every body's business for them, and what is singular, always did it well, and never neglected her own in consequence—the most useful of all useful people in a house—always ready to talk or to be talked to,—rather preferring the former—always happy, always busy, always ready to play country dances to the children, or quadrilles or waltzes for those of a larger growth. When every one was saying with a sigh ‘Who will play for us?’ and all who could play trying to feel unselfish and good-natured, and answering, ‘I will with great pleasure!’—then stepped in Miss Trevor, and querist and answerer both went to the enjoyment of the gliding quadrille or the whirling waltz, and Miss Trevor was a ‘dear good woman’

all the evening after, and part of the next morning.

Miss Trevor was a happy woman ! She had neither beauty, talents, nor riches—She was a very ordinary person—but she was useful and she was good-natured ; and her usefulness and her good-nature rendered her the happiest and the most generally liked of all the people of every one's acquaintance. Ye unaccomplished, ugly, pennyless damsels, who having answered ' No,' and been ' taken at your word,' have lost your last chance of married felicity, look at Miss Trevor and be comforted !

CHAPTER IV.

LADY HADLEY was pleased to have the Greys in her house. She had taken a liking to Mr. Grey, and to Anne. Sophy she thought of as of the hundred other pretty, and accomplished, and well-dressed Misses of social life. Mrs. Grey certainly was rather a bore ; but Lady Hadley believed her a good kind of woman, who made an excellent housekeeper, and *mere de famille*. She did not wonder that *she* should prize Sophy more highly than Anne, for she felt it would be

impossible that such a woman as Mrs. Grey could truly appreciate Anne's character; but she did wonder that all who had discernment and taste, who saw the modest grace of Anne, should not take as decided a liking to her as she had done herself.

When Anne went up to dress for dinner, it was with the conviction that it would be very pleasant at Hadley, and not so alarming as she had imagined. Lady Hadley was such a charming person, and so peculiarly kind in her manner, and old Miss Trevor was so chatty and good-humoured, that it was very comfortable to have such a resource, for it was almost impossible to be frightened at Miss Trevor.

Sophy, too, was in good-humour: she had heard of a pleasant party expected that evening—some whom it would be worth while should admire her; and Sophy had a fondness for admiration, and was never in a better

humour than when her vanity had been gratified. She let Anne have as much of their joint maid's attendance as she required, without saying a cross word, or feeling that she wanted her at the very moment that Anne did—dressed herself perfectly to her own satisfaction, and told Anne, when they were both ready, that she never saw her look so well in her life. Anne's little vanity just brought a *soupeçon* of a blush on her cheek, and one of those pretty half smiles of hers,—and they descended to the drawing-room ripe for conquest.

There assembled were Lord Hadley, whom we must just mention as a well-informed, agreeable man having a decided taste for hunting, and the reputation of being one of the ugliest men in England. Miss Trevor, who was always in good time, and had never been too late for breakfast, luncheon, or dinner, in her life. Mr. and Mrs. Cartwright,—both young

and both devoted—not to each other—no, though they really appeared to go on exceedingly well together, and generally called one another ‘Arthur,’ and ‘Emily,’ and ‘my dear,’ *in society*; but that to which they were both devoted, was, the one to being thought pretty and agreeable by all the world, as well as Mr. Cartwright; the other to being thought agreeable and *dangerous*, to the weaker and better half of the world, which Mrs. Cartwright was not unwilling to leave to his attention.

Then there was a good old prosy man—Sir Henry Poynton, a K.C.B., who had seen much active service, and was quite ready to talk about it whenever he could get any one to listen—always ready to laugh at a good joke, when he could understand it, or to puzzle at it till he did, and never grudged giving his laugh gratis five minutes after the call for it had ceased, and every one had become grave again.

Lady Marston, the Ladies Mary and Agnes Dalton, and Mr. Arthur Dalton, were variously distributed about the room, Lady Mary looking the amiable and pretty to attract the attention of another of the party, whom I have not yet named—no other than Lord Stoketon, one of the young men to whom mamas are very partial—in other words, a good ‘parti.’

Lord Stoketon was an ordinary kind of gentlemanlike, talkative, good-hearted young man, who was not in the least attending to Lady Mary and her prettiness, but looking in a sort of vacant happiness round the room, standing with his back to where the fire should have been. Lady Agnes Dalton was looking ugly and sensible in a conversation with Lord Hadley, who evidently considered her rather a bore, and felt the weight of her good sense more heavily than he wished. Mr. Arthur Dalton was whispering to Mrs. Cartwright, in a con-

genial arm - chair, sociably drawn close to hers.

Such were the people and their occupations when Mrs. Grey, Sophy, and Anne, entered the drawing - room at Hadley. Mr. Arthur Dalton's glass was immediately attracted to his eye, and the end of a whisper to Mrs. Cartwright curtailed by their entrance. One minute sufficed to satisfy him that he did not know them, and that Sophy was a pretty looking girl, and he was again whispering to Mrs. Cartwright, and she was again laughing affectedly, conscious she looked pretty when she did so.

Lord Stoketon's vacant stare was stopped, and his eyes were not again cast in vacancy towards the window, but rested for the remainder of the time till dinner on Sophy.

It was evident he had already settled her to be a very pretty girl. Sophy was quite aware

of this, too, and wished to know who he was, but would not ask, not even Miss Trevor, who seated herself by her and told her why Lady Hadley was so late for dinner, and what it was they had been talking about to keep her from dressing. This was all very interesting, and it was strange that Sophy should be desirous of any other information; but she had not much time to care, for Lady Hadley came down, and she found herself introduced to Lord Stoketon, she scarcely knew why, but she thought it was because he had desired it, and then she was introduced to Mr. Cartwright, and the Ladies Dalton—Mrs. Cartwright spoke to her without being introduced—Mr. Arthur Dalton put up his glass at her again meantime—Lord Stoketon stood by looking impatient, and Sophy Grey was a happy girl!

In a few minutes more she found herself at dinner, seated between Lord Stoketon and

Lady Marston. That dinner decided Lord Stoke-ton in thinking Miss Grey one of the prettiest and most charming girls he had ever known. It decided Miss Grey in the same opinion, and also in a few extra ones, such as that, Lord Stoketon was very agreeable, and that the least becoming sort of coiffure was that of Lady Mary Dalton, who sat just opposite. Anne was happily placed between Sir Henry Poynton, and Mr. Arthur Dalton, the latter of whom gave her her greatest chance of happiness by never speaking to her, and the former talked incessantly without requiring much in return, and was so good-humoured, and so evidently delighted with having found a good listener, at last, after a thirty years' search, that Anne could not dislike his talking to her. So the dinner was a pleasant one both for her and for Sophy.

That evening passed as most other evenings

pass in a country house, with a slight mixture of the dull and the agreeable. Mr. Cartwright had found out that Anne was prettier than Miss Grey, and made various attempts to talk to her, which Anne as regularly repulsed by turning to her constant friend and proser, Sir Henry Poynton, who was quite elated by this tacit hint for a new anecdote, and always set off again at the rate of a quarter of an hour a story ; so Anne had merely to smile, and she was safe from Mr. Cartwright. Mr. Cartwright could only look astonished, curl his lip, and be very particularly entertaining to Lady Mary Dalton.

That evening, after the goodnights had duly been uttered, and all the hands which were to be shaken had been shaken at the top of the stairs, Mrs. Grey and her daughters found themselves alone in the Miss Greys' apartment ; and then Sophy said, "What a pleasant evening we have had !" and "Oh ! I like Hadley

of all things!" and then did Mrs. Grey kiss her with a greater warmth of affection than usual, for it was evident that Sophy had made a conquest and been admired. Mrs. Grey was such a worthy woman! and like all other worthy mothers she always loved her daughters best when they were most admired, and least required it.

She kissed Anne too, with very singular affection, so I have no doubt that Anne had also been admired; indeed Lady Hadley had praised her very warmly, and Mrs. Grey had overheard Mr. Cartwright say to Lord Stoketon, "what a pretty creature she is!" so Mrs. Grey gave Anne two kisses, instead of one, and Sophy had one more for Lord Stoketon's sake.

"My dear," said Mrs. Grey, to her husband when they were alone, "what do you think of of it? It is quite certain he was very much struck."

“Not hurt, I hope, my dear,” said Mr. Grey, whose mind was then balancing between a note from his steward concerning the purchase of some Scotch cattle, and a story that had been told of a boy being thrown from a donkey.

“Not hurt, I hope, my dear,” said Mr. Grey, with a very compassionate tone.

“My dear Mr. Grey ! what are you thinking about ? why, I certainly hope, indeed, I suppose, Lord Stoketon is a little hurt ; for you know when men are in love, it is not always quite agreeable to them.”

“Lord Stoketon in love ! why, who with ? Has he an attachment ?” Scotch cattle and stewards’ letters still operating.

“Really, Mr. Grey,” said poor Mrs. Grey, “I wish you would attend a little. What I want to ask you about is whether you do not think Lord Stoketon is in love with Sophy ; and

I am sure it is a matter of great interest, and one I feel most deeply."

"Oh! now I understand," said Mr. Grey at last, Sophy and Lord Stoketon making a head against Scots, steward, boy and donkey.

"Now I understand," said he laughing, "at least, as much as I can at present; but as to Lord Stoketon being in love with Sophy, that is what I cannot pretend to say. He admired her, as most men do; I saw that;—but he had no other person very attractive to talk to; so, my dear, we will not think of him for a son-in-law just yet."

Mrs. Grey said no more. It was not the first premature scheme she had formed.

And now let heroines and their mothers fall asleep, for they will require it, if they knew how much they had to go through before my book is finished. I have brought both my heroines out on the stage of my book. I feel

nervous about going on. I have got them both into a large country house, and I don't know how they are to make a graceful exit. Sophy might make a bold step and walk off, backwards, sideways, or strait forwards; but Anne must be gently led; she must get away quietly, yet not in silence. We must not let it be asked what did she come on for? which, if she says not a word, meets with no hero, and with no adventure, will certainly be asked. As heroine, she must not play Dumbly, yet it must not be felt 'what a noise Anne Grey is making!'

What is to be done then? Whilst they sleep, I will muse. I will set my brain on the rack, and visions of grandeur shall flit past me in the solemn hours of night, and the burnings of intense thought shall eat up my soul; and I will—I will—I will do great things—I will call the Miss Greys in the morning!

Poor Miss Greys—poor Mr. and Mrs. Grey

—poor Lord and Lady Hadley—all ye poor mortals assembled at Hadley—the hour is at length come. You must leave the comfort of your bed—you must get up, look ugly, and feel cross—be cold, though it is only the first week in September—be ashamed to ask for a fire, though you feel September frost worthy of December, stealing to your fingers' ends. You must forget all your pleasant dreams—you must remember all the ills that befell you the day before—you must all get up.

Sophy woke from the dream of Lord Stoke-ton and Captain Herbert. You will never decide the question. Anne woke from that fascinating vision of a K.C.B., from those words still drumming in her ear, “It was a very singular event. Another moment, and the tiger would have had me in his mouth. His tail was thrown round me, and I heard”—Anne’s agony for the safety of her K.C.B. had become

extreme. She made a movement of eager anxiety to listen for the next words, and in a loud and startling tone she heard, "It is rather more than half past nine, ma'am," and Anne and Sophy were both awake.

CHAPTER V.

“It is rather more than half past nine, ma’am,” and Anne and Sophy were both awake.

We find nearly all the party assembled at breakfast—Miss Trevor was presiding over the tea, an occupation for which she had a particular penchant. Lord Stoketon was ready to say good morning to Miss Grey—to make a slight attempt at shaking hands, without feeling certain whether the degree of acquaint-

anceship warranted it, and to be rewarded for the effort by Miss Grey's extended hand, and a bright smile with her 'good morning.'

Sophy had the art of always looking happy, and rosy, and bright in the morning, a superior attainment ! but if the result of a free conscience, why is it not more common ?

Great are the delights of a breakfast table ! Great the charm of conversation amidst the fragrance of coffee, the fumes of tea, and the demolition of buttered rolls. Many a bright idea comes into the brain with a new pile of toast, or is rolled out with a fresh pat of butter. Many a *bon mot* brought to light with the first developement of a new-laid egg, and many a scientific mystery unfathomed with the sight of the farthest depth of egg shell. Breakfast perhaps is rather the time for wise and philosophical discussion than for the light and lively tone of dinner talk. People come down

with a stock of goodness about them, which disposes them to be sensible. The goodness wears off during the day—very early indeed in most people, and by dinner time, though they are not really more cheerful, they are much more witty—much more satirical—much more sparkling, and well dressed.

But, you would know what was said so very indicative of amiability and wisdom at the breakfast table at Hadley? Nothing after all, very particular! Miss Trevor talked very good naturedly to Lady Marston, during the intervals of pouring out tea, and Lady Marston was the very dullest woman in the world. Sir Henry Poynton had manœuvred to sit by Anne, but Anne escaped and was seated between Mrs. Cartwright and Lord Hadley; so Sir Henry talked across the table to her, and when his neighbours would not listen, reminded her of the little anecdote he told her yesterday

evening. Mrs. Cartwright had Mr. Dalton on the other side of her, but when she could spare a few minutes from talking to him, she turned to Anne, to whom she had, as she said, taken ‘a vast fancy,’ (perhaps she had heard that Lady Hadley had done the same); and she questioned and cross-questioned her on her likes and dislikes, her sentiments, her weaknesses, her amusements, and her occupations; then turned to Mr. Arthur Dalton, and whispered “what sweet simplicity!” and looked sweet *for* Anne, I suppose, and *at* him; then turned to Anne again, paid her a great many pretty compliments, and invited her to come to her room, and look at a most charming bonnet, a Swiss costume, which she was quite sure would suit her exactly. Anne thought her very absurd, very good-natured, but very tiresome.

Then Lady Agnes Dalton said something

about the wonderful velocity of steam-carriages ; and some one said something in answer, and some one said something more, and all these somethings led to a discussion which was general, and this discussion ended in another on first attachments, and the propriety of men leaving their eldest sons every thing, and their daughters nothing. How railways and steam carriages led to this I will not pretend to say ! but so it was ! and very interesting discussions they were, and very much did every one regret the conclusion of the last drop of tea, and the last scrap of toast, which had served as an excuse for lingering at the table.

Before the breakfast room was deserted, Lord Stoketon, who sat by Miss Grey, had found out that she lived within eight miles of Hadley, that she had two brothers, and that she never rode. He had told her that she ought to ride, for she would look very well on

horseback, and that he had the quietest little horse in the world, that he could lend her. During the remainder of the day Sophy received a little more information from him ; such as ‘ that he was struck with her appearance the moment she entered the room the preceding evening ’—‘ that he thought her quite different from any other person he had ever seen ’ (I wonder why this should be a compliment ?) and that ‘ he had been told by his sisters that he would never marry, but that he somehow thought he should ! ’ What Sophy told him in return I do not know—but most likely she told him she was going to an Archery next week, and that she thought his sisters must be very fond of him, as he was an only brother.

However this may be, when the sisters were alone in their room that night, Sophy asked Anne what she thought of Lord Stoketon ; and after about five minutes’ abstraction, she began

to talk of Captain Herbert, and said, for the first time that she thought he was rather a coxcomb, and, that she preferred people who had more bluntness and frankness of manner.

Her grave mood was soon over, and then the two sisters discussed the party at Hadley, and the events of the day, and laughed over all the variety of characters—Lady Agnes Dalton's sense, Lady Marston's dullness, Lady Mary's attempt to appear pretty and interesting to Lord Stoketon, Sir Henry Poynton's prosing, dear old Miss Trevor's chit chat, and to praise and praise over and over again that very dear Lady Hadley; but Anne was more warm on that subject than Sophy. Sophy was quite ready to talk of the ridiculous, but she was soon tired when there was nothing to be bestowed but praise. They both joined most heartily in decrying Mr. and Mrs. Cartwright; and joined as heartily in laughing at Mr. Author Dalton,

who was a conceited simpleton, affecting exclusiveness, and a mere hanger-on of those supposed to be of any consideration in the world.

The next day, when the letters came, Lady Hadley exclaimed with great delight, as she tossed one to Lord Hadley, "I am so glad!" "Edward Temple comes to us to-day, and there is his note. Just like himself! He always has the power of making one laugh on or off paper, more than any person I know, without making one feel that it is foolish to do so: when I am with him and he chooses to be entertaining, I am always convinced that nothing is so wise as laughing. Do not you think the same, Lady Agnes?" said she appealing to her, but without much idea of being understood.

"Certainly, laughing may not be considered as a mark of intellectual weakness on all occasions," said Lady Agnes, looking grave and very sensible.

“ Oh dear !” I hope there is no harm in it !” said Mrs. Cartwright, who had once been told that she never looked so beautiful as when she laughed, addressing Lord Stoketon.

“ I should not like at all not to be allowed to laugh,” said his Lordship, “ for I think it excellent fun. Miss Grey, you do not think it very shocking, I hope ?” said he to Sophy.

“ I hope it is not,” said she, laughing as she spoke, to confirm the assertion, “ for I must be a very shocking person if it is !”

“ And so you all believe that I think it very foolish to laugh !” said Lady Hadley. “ I wish some one of you would say some very good thing, that I might have the opportunity of proving the contrary. Lord Stoketon ! do be good-natured ! Do say something witty ?”

“ Don’t ask me, Lady Hadley ! I would do anything I could for you ; but I never said a witty thing in my life, but once, when I made

a pun. I never found it out till I heard them all laughing, and then I asked what it was about, and they told me it was my pun ! But I never could hit on another !”

“ Very well ! that will do admirably,” said Lady Hadley, really laughing.

“ Miss Grey, shall we finish that game of chess ?” said Lord Stoketon to Sophy, and off they went, and they did finish it, and Miss Grey beat Lord Stoketon.

It was settled that morning that the Greys should stay at Hadley a whole week longer. Mrs. Grey hardly knew how to seem not too much delighted. She *could* have jumped for joy, if it would have been decorous ! for only think ! There was Hadley alone !—*that* was enough ! To be able to say that they had been staying so long at Hadley—still more that they had wished to go home very soon, but that the Hadleys would not hear of it, and had pressed

their staying so vehemently that she and Mr. Grey at length gave way. Then, as if this were not sufficient happiness, there was Lord Stoke-ton ! Even, if he had not been inclined to fall in love with Sophy, a whole week in her society with nothing else to do, would make it impossible for him to avoid it ! but as it was, when Mrs. Grey saw him, as the Hadleys were pressing their stay, actually taking the part of master of the house, and, at the expense of good breeding, pressing too ! *then* she felt that Sophy must be Lady Stoketon, and that all would be settled before the end of the week.

Then about Anne, too ! Lady Hadley had not only asked them all to stay, but she had asked that Anne might remain still longer, or come some other time. Was there any thing so delightful ! who could wonder at Mrs. Grey's happiness !

“Where is your brother, Miss Grey ?” said

Lord Hadley. "I sent a note of *invite* to him; but, I suppose, like all other young men, he is little at home. To send a letter to a young man at home is, in fact, sending to the place where you are sure it will *not* find him."

"William is — at this moment I cannot tell exactly where he is," said Sophy, laughing.

"Ah! I knew you could not," rejoined Lord Hadley, laughing too. "Do not attempt it. Your best way is always to ask from others, and you may happen to find out in this manner. Cartwright," raising his voice to reach Mr. Cartwright at the other end of the long library; "did not you say you met William Grey somewhere? Here is Miss Grey wants to know where her brother is."

Miss Grey laughed and said, "it was often very true that she could not tell where William

was, and that she had sometimes learnt from strangers; but that, in this instance, she did know whereabouts he was; for he was in Yorkshire, if he was not at the lakes, or gone into Scotland, or returned into Lancashire, or Cheshire; but a letter had not come very lately."

"Bravo, Miss Grey! You guess that your brother is either not in England, or in one out of one, two, three—out of *five* counties. Cartwright, do help this unhappy sister to a little less grand and unbounded idea of where her brother is."

"All I can tell Miss Grey is that I met Mr. William Grey just three days ago in Cheshire at the Grahams," said Mr. Cartwright; "and there he seemed fixed—very pretty girl, Jane Graham, Miss Grey!"

"I don't know her," said Sophy.

Now what am I to do with all these people

for the next two or three days? Mr. Grey was very happy with Lady Hadley, with whom he had a great deal of conversation, in the course of which they mutually discovered that they were both very superior people. Lady Hadley's high opinion of Mr. Grey increased to a great degree; Mr. Grey's opinion of Lady Hadley, as a pleasing, well-bred woman, was magnified into thinking her a remarkably amiable, sensible, right-minded person, with very good abilities and judgment, and the most engaging manners he ever knew.

Sophy was thoroughly occupied in receiving Lord Stoketon's attentions, and Lord Stoketon in paying them. She had likewise a little extra work in keeping down Mr. Cartwright's civility to the proper bounds of non-interference with Lord Stoketon. Mr. Cartwright thought Anne very pretty, and he wished that she should think him very charming; but it would

not do. Anne ! the shy, timid, Miss Anne Grey snubbed him ! so he saw that Sophy was being admired, and found out that she must be prettier than Anne. Lord Stoketon was in love with her ; Miss Grey, therefore, was the person for his *petits soins*, and he gave them, and they were received very well, except when Lord Stoketon was in the way, and Mr. Cartwright would not get out of the way. Then Sophy lost her attention, and did not blush at his compliments, nor smile at his agreeable flatteries.

So all these people were very well occupied, and as for the remainder ! they occupied themselves too. But Heaven defend me from relating the occupations of a Lady Marston, a Lady Mary, and a Lady Agnes Dalton, a Mrs. Cartwright, and a Mr. Arthur Dalton.

Reader, courteous, or uncourteous, *that* I leave to your bright fancy ! and may it be light

and airy as Mr. Arthur Dalton's smallest small-talk ! gay and unencumbered with the weight of sense, as Mrs. Cartwright's sparkling laughter ! sweet and sentimental as Lady Mary's last smile at Lord Stoketon !

And now, ' see the conquering hero comes ! ' " Mr. Temple, my Lady," and Mr. Temple was ushered into the room.

" Ah, Mr. Temple ! never was there such a welcome sound ! " and ' how do you do's ' were resounding up and down the long library at Hadley, and Mr. Temple was come.

Anne, as he entered, wondered for a moment whether he would remember her, and she had just settled that he did not, and had felt a little sorry ; but he turned towards the part of the room where she sat, looked for a moment, and then, as Anne raised her head, bowed and smiled ; and the smile came naturally,

for he seemed pleased to see her there. However it went no farther, for he did not come near her, nor take any notice of her again before dinner.

CHAPTER VI.

AND now all the party at Hadley were dressed, and looked as beautiful as they could, and came down to dinner.

I flatter myself I am like Homer. I never miss an opportunity of bringing in man in his carnivorous capacity. I never forget that he eats and drinks, and I take great pleasure in recording that he does. I never miss bringing him to breakfast and to dinner.

Do not suppose that I am going to set down any of the good things said by Mr. Temple. It is always the safest way for a novelist when he introduces any character that he means to be very superior—who is to be very clever, or agreeable, or sensible, or witty, to say for him as little as possible; but make it thoroughly understood that if you had thought fit to set down his conversation it would have been something quite beyond all praise. But do not pretend to talk for your first rate characters, unless you know you are a first rate character yourself. I can assure you it is not safe, unless you happen to be a Miss Austen, or a Miss Edgeworth, or a Mr. or a Miss any other first-rate novelist.

How is it likely that you, perhaps a quiet, stupid, prosy man or woman, can invent all the witty piquant things which your supremely agreeable talkers have to say? Modestly

relinquish the hope; but give the reader to understand that he, or she, does say all the things which are the gems of conversation—the diamonds of society!

I will not quote Edward Temple, but you must take it for granted that he said a great many clever things. He did not always talk much—sometimes scarcely at all; but all he said, was it grave or gay, much or little, was worth hearing—and he *never bored*!

Any one on seeing Edward Temple must have known that he would be agreeable, and a perfect gentleman. Women might think him very captivating. Men might not think of calling him good-looking; but no man would have objected to look like him.

Mr. Temple did his part of the agreeable at dinner; he sat by Lady Agnes Dalton, and he talked very sensibly to her, and encouraged her to talk very sensibly to him, and never

smiled the whole of the time. Every now and then he looked at Lady Hadley to see if she were aware how very well Lady Agnes was talking ; and sometimes he looked for the same purpose at Anne, who sat just opposite. When he looked at either he had half a curl on his lip, which seemed like an approach to a smile, but which was not allowed to be a decided one ; but there was an amused air about it, and a lurking touch of satire !

I had rather have been Lady Hadley, or Anne Grey, than Lady Agnes at that time ! but, poor thing, she knew nothing about it, and ever after that eventful dinner, “ Mr. Temple was a remarkably intellectual, sensible person,” with her ; “ much more so than was universally known, or than might be supposed from his general character.” Mr. Temple, how much pleased you would have been had you heard it ? Anne could scarcely help smiling

when those quiet looks came across the table, and Edward Temple saw that she could not.

In the evening there was a good deal of talking, a little *Ecarté* playing, and there were some work-baskets in use : Miss Trevor's and Lady Marston's amongst the number ; and Mrs. Grey [^] was learning a new kind of knitting to make poor old men uncomfortable ; and watching in the intervals of " turn your worsted this way, and bring your pin that way," the progress of the flirtation between Sophy and Lord Stoketon. Over went one knitting pin.

" A house in town," thought Mrs. Grey.

" Oh ! not on that side the pin, my dear Madam," screamed Miss Trevor.

" Oh ! dear no," said Mrs. Grey. Then over came the first coloured worsted, and back went the second, and all was going on well.

" A Brussels lace veil, certainly," cogitated Mrs. Grey.

“There is a *little* mistake there, I fear,” interposed Miss Trevor.

“Oh, dear yes !” said Mrs. Grey.

Oh, Mrs. Grey ! how difficult a thing it was for Miss Trevor to teach you your knitting !

Anne found it a pleasant evening. She had a good deal of conversation with Lord Hadley, and she thought him more agreeable, and less of a mere fox-hunter, than she had expected. Lady Hadley had sometimes joined in the conversation, and Anne was always glad to be talked to by her ; she was so kind, and had such pleasing manners ! Sir Henry Poynton, of course, devoted some of his time to her ; but that which, as she thought over the evening, gave her the most decided impression of its having been pleasant, was a little conversation which she had with Mr. Temple.

He had come up purposely to speak to her, had sat down by her, and before she had time

to be very much frightened at the idea of being spoken to by the clever and entertaining man of the party, had contrived to interest her so far, that she could think of nothing but being amused.

Music was spoken of by some of the party ; and Anne started a little and blushed, for she thought that her turn would come. But it was dropped again ; not however without Mr. Temple having remarked her blush and start.

“ Perhaps you do not know,” said he, “ that you ought to be very much obliged to me. I see you feel at this moment that you have just had an escape from singing.”

Anne smiled ! but said nothing.

“ Now you ought to be aware that I know you are too—what shall I say ?—too modest perhaps, to like singing before all of us. Is it not so ?”

“ Yes it is,” said Anne, looking pleased and amused

“ Ah! You did not think I should find that out ; but it does not require so very great a degree of discernment.”

“ I fear not,” said Anne. “ I am sure not only you, but any one, might discover it, who took the trouble to think about it.”

“ Ah well! I did take the trouble you see!”

Anne blushed, for she thought from what she had said, he might think her conceited.

“ Perhaps,” he continued, “ you will not remember that the first time I had the pleasure of meeting you was in this house, and that you had actually been forced to sing, and were going most cruelly to be made sing again. To be sure it was a very excusable cruelty, in any one who had heard you before. You are smiling. I am afraid you are taking that for a compliment, and you do not like the appearance of one. You are laughing at me for

trying to express my sense of your musical merit."

"No indeed," said Anne, "that would be very ungrateful."

"I am glad to hear you speak of gratitude," replied he, "that is exactly the sentiment I am wishing to inspire. You look surprised, but you do not yet know that you ought to be eternally obliged to me—that you are indebted to me for your preservation—not from the danger of loosing your life—but from a much greater one in your estimation — from the horror of singing a second song!"

Anne laughed.

"I exerted all my abilities to save you from such a fearful occurrence; and now Miss Grey, do not you feel very grateful—will you not say that you are very much obliged to me?"

"I suppose I ought to feel so," said Anne.

"If you think *that*, I am satisfied," said he, "and I have now of course the satisfaction of

knowing that Miss Anne Grey is very much obliged to me."

Anne did not make any answer : she was getting shy, but she was very much pleased, that Mr. Temple should have paid her a compliment. She thought it was one, though she would not be quite sure ; but she would think about it when she was alone. Here the conversation ended, for Lady Hadley addressed Edward Temple ; he got up to talk to her, and did not come near Anne again the remainder of the evening, but he was very amusing, and Anne sometimes was at liberty to listen to him.

So much for the first evening of Edward Temple's visit at Hadley. If any one wishes to know what he thought of Anne Grey, it was this, that she was a very pretty ladylike girl, quite unlike the generality of Misses whether in town or country — a person whose character was worth studying, whose dignified

simplicity and modesty would have rendered it as difficult as it would be unpardonable to ridicule her, and in short, he thought of her as an interesting novelty.

Edward Temple had a turn for ridicule and satire, but he never exercised it (except under the strongest temptation of absurdity) but when it was deserved by affectation and self-importance. He had a high opinion of himself, but not unjustly. He had great abilities and he knew it; but he did not think them greater than they really were. He somewhat despised the world, at large, for he was quick at seeing its faults and follies: the world had done all it could to spoil him, for it flattered, admired, and fawned on him; but he was too keensighted to be spoiled.

Perhaps he might have been capable of strong attachments and of warm and steady feelings; but there were none to call them

forth. His parents had died when he was young, and he had lost an only sister about six years ago.

The mutual affection between the brother and sister had been very strong, and her death had left him with few on whom to depend for affection, or who were capable of exciting it. Edward Temple then became a gay man of the world,—at least such he was considered, and such we will conclude him to be when he became acquainted with Anne Grey and ourselves.

I had forgotten to mention that he prided himself on a knowledge of character. The discovery of hidden virtues, or hidden foibles in very new acquaintance was one of his amusements; and if Edward Temple prided himself peculiarly on any thing, it was on his powers of discrimination—on his successful voyages of discovery round the busy world of minds,

and hearts, presented to him by every man and woman of his acquaintance. He thought Anne Grey a pretty, simple girl, and that he should have much amusement in researches through that mind, and heart, and disposition.

Nous verrons ! Men have hearts too,—and women's hearts—alas they may be broken. Feelings may be trifled with—the scrutiny of a character—the hope to drive away the ennui of a rainy day in a country house—the vanity which had taken alarm at an indifferent tone from a pretty, and an indifferent person—all or any of these may lead to the devoted attention, the tone, the look, the deceit—the self-deceit ! And then comes the woman's affection unalterably given ;—the man's assertion to himself and others that ' he meant nothing.' Too late to say *that*, when the woman, deceived and confiding, has sunk under the shock of blighted hopes—

Too late when, her health injured, her happiness gone—the once young, the beautiful, the gay, the light-hearted—has sunk into the being with beauty vanished, with feelings grown old—distrustful, hopeless, perhaps soured in temper, she either lives to swell the list of peevish, back-biting, tale-bearing, old maids, or she sinks at once more sadly, or perhaps more enviably, into the early grave. There she lies broken-hearted in the room where the sun had streamed in so often to waken her to bright images—to day-dreams of happiness—to the smiles of fond parents—to their approving looks—to the recollection of childish hours—of childish hopes—of a heart still child-like and innocent—gay, lovely, and confiding.—There she lies now, in that same room, a poor, broken-hearted thing—forlorn and hopeless.—There again she lies on that bed, where she had lain her head so peaceably in days gone by.

The curtains are drawn around—the white sheet spread over—all white, cold, and still—there she lies, a corpse ! And she has found her rest, and her bed, from which she had risen day by day to happiness, from which she had risen, flushed with hope to meet his return—that bed is her bed of death. And she is beautiful in death, though pain and mortal suffering have set their stamp on her brow. Sisters have wept—and parents prayed—and the last kiss has been given—the coffin is closed—and the burst of grief and horror over—All is still.

And where is he ? the author of this wretchedness ? where is he now ? There in the world—gay and, as he would say, ‘ happy’, devoted to some new fair one—making new conquests—and meaning nothing. “ Miss —— is dead ! ” Does that strike sadly or with upbraiding on his ear ? No. *She* is lying cold and stiff in her winding sheet. *He* says “ Ah poor girl ! I

knew her once" — and then, after a pause, some witticism is uttered—he laughs—he is gay; — and that is all the deceiver thinks of his victim.

CHAPTER VII.

AND what did Anne Grey think of Mr. Temple? She thought him very agreeable and superior to every other person in the world. But he was doomed to be soon forgotten that night. Sophy began to talk about Lord Stoketon, and to this subject Anne gave all her interest.

Lord Stoketon had been very attentive that evening, and had said one or two ‘very strange,’ ‘very particular things,’ as Sophy confessed.

“What did Anne think of it?”

Anne said she thought there could be no doubt of his partiality.

“ Oh no ! ” said Sophy, neither looking pleased, nor very much the reverse.

It was evident she did not wish to be assured by her confidante that Lord Stoketon was deeply in love with her. Of that she was convinced ; but that of which she now wanted to be convinced, was whether she was in love with Lord Stoketon. This was the point on which Anne was to be useful.

Sophy blushed, and sighed, and almost cried ; and said he was so rich, and had such a beautiful place in the country, and such a good house in town. She wished she knew whether she liked him. She thought she ought to accept him if he proposed ; and he almost—he had said something that evening ; then a great effort, and a turn away of the head from Anne, and a sigh — and then was forced out, “ What

do you think Captain Herbert would say, Anne, if he heard that I was going to be married?"

There was the point then! And now Sophy feels much happier—Now the confidante knows what is ailing, and all goes on smoothly. She can work at her difficulties. She can soften down Lord Stoketon's roughnesses. She can refine the gallant Captain away into a mere military coxcomb, a maker of love to all the pretty girls of a watering-place. A little polish makes Lord Stoketon perfect—A very little brighter polish shows Captain Herbert a mere puppet—a man of soft speeches, rings, and chains. A still less skilful hand might use a bolder measure, and place in simple truth, and in bright array before the eyes of the wavering fair one, on the one side, houses, lands, carriages, jewels, coronet! On the other—one gig—one showy horse—a small house by

the road side—a showy husband, using alone the showy gig, and the one showy horse, with the one showy, half-starved boy of all work—“All for myself, none for my little wife at home!”

This is what a skilful confidante might have done. But Anne Grey did not wish to be skilful for either party. She wished to know the truth—to see how far it would be desirable for Sophy’s happiness that she should marry Lord Stoketon. She did not believe that Sophy had any feeling that might be called attachment to Captain Herbert. Her vanity had been flattered, and she had a little sentiment about this tall, handsome captain; and, when she thought of the chance of being married to another, he came into her mind. She thought how tall, and how handsome he was, and how many sighs he had uttered for her, and how many compliments he had paid her. Still Lord Stoketon

was very much in love with her, and that is a great point with a good-hearted girl. He was rich, and a very good match, and that was another grand point, and she could find no real objection to his character.

Anne felt that Lord Stoketon could never have inspired her with a doubt as to whether she could accept him or not. *She* could not have loved him sufficiently, for there was nothing in his character to which she could have looked up with that admiration and respect which she thought so essential a feeling of a wife towards a husband. But she believed that Sophy would be very happy in accepting him; still in one respect only did she dare to advise; and that was with regard to Captain Herbert. She thought that Sophy ought to forget him, for even if he were a more estimable character, and she were certain of his attachment, poverty would forbid their union.

Sophy received the advice well, and Lord Stoketon was already greatly indebted to Anne. Anne praised him, and said that she wished him to succeed: she begged that Sophy would examine her own feelings, and if she felt certain that she could not accept him, she urged her not to encourage him in hopes, that must end in disappointment to him; and Sophy kissed Anne—cried a little, and went to sleep determined to forget Captain Herbert, and accept Lord Stoketon as soon as he should propose. She dreamt of Captain Herbert, and woke crying because she thought he had been shot by Lord Stoketon.

“I wonder why it is,” said Lady Hadley, the next morning, when the Greys were out of the room, “that one feels to love some people directly—Now, Anne Grey—there is a sweetness in her countenance that makes it impossible not to feel sure that she is

amiable, and that one ought to love her. Do you ever feel that?" said she, addressing Edward Temple.

"Certainly," said he. "Who has not felt it? and with Anne Grey it is remarkably so."

"I do love that girl!" interposed Lady Hadley.

Mr. Temple did not say, "Yes, so do I;" which perhaps he ought to have done, but went on "She possesses all the requisites for being loved at first sight. Gentleness is written in her face--and she is perfectly feminine--feminine not only in appearance, but in refinement and simplicity of mind and manner. In this consists her greatest charm. She was made to be loved, and thought of as amiable and feminine. Who could love a woman whom they call masculine? 'Masculine minded Miss Tomkins, I love you!' No, that

will never do. A man might say, ‘masculine minded Miss Tomkins, I have a respect—an admiring fear of you!’ but never *love*. No—a woman, to be loved, should be thought of as gentle and feminine, let her talents be what they may. It would be the height of barbarity to think or speak of Anne Grey but as the gentle, the feminine Anne Grey!”

“Excellent! Mr. Temple,” exclaimed Lady Hadley, who had leant forward with eagerness, as he continued speaking with growing enthusiasm. “We are alone, I see,” said she, looking round. “That is excellent! To hear Mr. Temple warmed by the simplicity and quiet grace of a little Anne Grey, into a fine burst of enthusiasm. If I did not know you thoroughly as not a marrying man—as a despiser of our poor sex—as so *very* fastidious, I should say, *Voilà!* Mr. Temple is caught at last!”

Edward Temple laughed, and so did Lady Hadley.

“ And, my dear Lady Hadley,” said he, “ you may say, if you like, that Edward Temple *is* caught at last. Do not think so ill of me as to believe that all that fine burst of enthusiasm was *a sham*. I really *am* caught by the charms of your favourite, and I admire her character exceedingly. Who knows that, in the depths of my chamber, I do not apostrophize her ! Who knows that I do not walk up and down my room, calling on Anne Grey—sweet Anne Grey ! Who knows that I have not already written a copy of verses, of which every other line ends with sweet Anne Grey, and to rhyme which I have exhausted all the days, and lays, and ways, and praise in the vocabulary.”

“ Now don’t be provoking, Mr. Temple,” said Lady Hadley. “ I don’t want you to make love to Anne Grey, as I know you are not

a marrying man, but I want to know seriously, whether you do not admire her. No, now I see you are going to make some odious answer not in the least serious; so I will not use the word admire. But you know what I mean—love her—as I do:—like her as if you were—Ah! I see it is of no use! Well, you do admire Anne Grey, and like her, all but love her, spite of those pretended grave faces; and she shall punish you! Never was there a girl with more firmness of character with all her gentleness, and she shall punish you some time or other, when those bursts of virtuous enthusiasm become more frequent.”

“Must I say thank you?” said Edward Temple.

“Say what you please,” said Lady Hadley, as Anne Grey entered the room, “for here she is.”

Edward Temple gave a look at Lady Had-

ley, as much as to say—"I must take care of myself;" then walked to a table, took up a book, and began to read as intently as if he had been studying for a first class at Oxford.

Anne had observed his look as he entered the room, she had just heard Lady Hadley's "Here she is;" she felt sure that they had been speaking of her, and that Mr. Temple had probably been laughing at her. She could not think that Lady Hadley would. She felt very shy, and wished herself out of the room again; but Lady Hadley engaged her in conversation, and Anne soon forgot that Mr. Temple was in the room, and that he had been laughing at her.

Many of the party then came in, and drives and rides were talked of, and Lord Stoketon was very pressing for a riding and driving party to see ——— a kind of show place near, which could not possibly be arranged otherwise than

for him to drive Miss Grey in Lady Hadley's poney carriage. No one except himself could be trusted to drive these ponies, which were sufficiently spirited to be almost useless. Lady Hadley had no idea of driving that day, and he was certain that every other carriage would be in requisition for the remainder of the party, and Miss Grey was the only person who was sufficiently courageous. So the party must take place; the rain which threatened would not come; and Lord Stoketon was so eager in persuading every one, and especially Mrs. Cartwright and Lady Mary Dalton, that it would be a delightful expedition, that it was at length determined on.

The carriages were ordered: Sir Henry Poynton, Lady Marston, Mrs. Cartwright, and Mr. Arthur Dalton (unalterably devoted man!) were doomed to the four horses, and more dignified barouche. Mr. and Mrs. Grey both beg-

ged to be excused going: Lady Hadley was decidedly not to go: Lord Hadley would go if there was room for him. The poney carriage was to convey Sophy and Lord Stoketon, and as they went with a large party, Mrs. Grey thought there could be no objection to their doing so. She hoped not, for nothing was so certain as a proposal in the tête à tête of a long drive. Miss Trevor, the Ladies Mary and Agnes Dalton, Anne, Mr. Cartwright, Mr. Temple, and Lord Hadley, were all to be 'stowed away' (as a sailor would express it) in a britchka and a gig.

Mr. Cartwright thought it "horrid dull work that two men should go together. Why would not one of the ladies follow Miss Grey's example, and trust herself to his driving. He was certain Miss Anne Grey was not a coward, for she had said she was not."

Anne trembled, and directly professed to prefer staying at home.

“A dull day at home rather than Cartwright,” said Edward Temple, in a low voice to her. “I admire your taste, Miss Grey,” in a louder voice.

Mr. Cartwright looked suspicious, and said in rather an affronted tone, “What is it in which Miss Anne Grey has just shewn so much taste?”

“Oh! it was a little matter of opinion! Miss Grey confessed that she agreed with me. You will excuse the vehemence of my applause,” said he, turning to her, “my approbation of the taste which coincided with my own. It must have been very clamourous, I fear, as it attracted Cartwright’s attention.”

He looked at Anne with such a determined air of intelligence, that it made her feel angry and confused. She remembered Mr. Temple’s

smile and look at Lady Hadley as she had entered the room, and she thought he must be wishing to turn her into ridicule.

She was thoroughly vexed, and the more so, as she saw Mr. Cartwright growing angry; but the next moment Mr. Temple made his peace with her again by setting all right with Mr. Cartwright, and changing his manner towards herself to that of quiet politeness.

At length it was decided that the timid retiring Anne should be seated on the barouche box with Mr. Temple, and this without much more than an—"Oh no!" and a scarcely audible "I should like quite as well to stay at home," on her part. Poor Mr. Cartwright was doomed to the gig and Lord Hadley, and then the cavalcade set out: Mrs. Grey had been to Sophy's room to see that her bonnet was put on becomingly, and, satisfied she never looked so pretty, she cast an anxious glance after her and Lord Stoketon.

‘He must propose,’ thought she, as she watched Lord Stoketon’s excessive care to give Sophy cloaks and shawls enough; saw him look delighted, and drive away; then saw Anne on the barouche-box, and Edward Temple by her—wondered whether he was very rich, whether, though every one said he was too fastidious to marry, he still might not do so, and perhaps prefer a quiet country girl to a town-initiated lady or Miss.

That cavalcade was a pleasant sight to Mrs. Grey. But now will Lord Stoketon propose to Sophy? Will Edward Temple fall in love with Anne, or will Anne fall in love with Edward Temple? No. None of the three.

Lord Stoketon did not propose to Sophy; and if Edward Temple had been asked whether he had fallen in love with Anne, he would have

said “No; but I will if you wish it;” and if you had asked Anne Grey whether she had fallen in love with Edward Temple, she would have blushed and said, “Oh no! I never thought of it.”

However, the expedition answered perfectly to the principal characters. They all said it had been a most delightful day, and that it was the most beautiful place ever seen. Every one agreed in this, excepting Lady Mary Dalton, and Mr. Cartwright. Mr. Cartwright did not find his attentions well received by Miss Grey or her sister, and he was tired of bestowing them on Lady Mary Dalton, who received them too well. Lady Mary was jealous of the Miss Greys. Every one seemed to be thinking of them, and her sweet smiles were unheeded by Lord Stoketon or Mr. Temple. Even old Sir Henry Poynton could think of nothing but

Anne. So both Lady Mary and Mr. Cartwright thought ——— rather a poor place, and not at all worth the trouble of seeing. Lady Mary had said she wondered what people could discover so very charming in those Miss Greys. For her part she could not reconcile herself to that absence of a certain *ton*. She believed she was fastidious, but the slightest vulgarity always struck her immediately.

This was not said to Edward Temple, but within his hearing. He made use of it. Poor Lady Mary! What did you gain by it? Let the envious, the malicious, the ill-natured, sometimes ask themselves that little question.

But hark! those sweet dulcet tones—those notes soft and clear—the plaintive tenderness, the expressive richness of that gentle voice—Anne Grey is singing.

Anne had been asked to sing after having listened to a fine bravura of Lady Agnes Dalton's, performed, as she would have said, with spirit. Anne had sat down quite terrified ; but luckily, in the middle of her song, Edward Temple began to tell an amusing story to Mrs. Cartwright, and Mrs. Cartwright laughed so heartily, and her laugh set so many of the party talking, that Anne ended by feeling that no one could be listening to her, so she went through her song more at ease. She began another, and by degrees, Edward Temple still making the agreeable, and (jointly with Mrs. Cartwright) a great noise, she became interested in the music, forgot that any one was in the room, and went on till she turned to that beautiful little song ' Kathleen o' More.'

Anne loved music to her heart. She loved singing, and her soul went with her voice, and this song was one of her favourites.

She had forgotten her shyness, for she believed no one had been listening to her; the piano forte stood in a happy little recess, and she gave way to all her usual expression, to the touching plaintiveness and simplicity of the music; and the clear notes had burst from her lips, and had swelled into the fortes and died away into the melting pianos before she was aware that the talking had ceased, and all were listening to that one voice.

Edward Temple could no longer go on making the due quantity of noise with Mrs. Cartwright. He must be selfish, and listen, and be surprised, enraptured. Lady Hadley could talk no more. Lord Hadley—all who had any taste for music must listen, and there was a dead silence.

Anne's song was finished. Edward Temple seated himself by her.

“I have been thinking for the last few

minutes of your song," said he, "whether it were possible to hear anything more beautiful. What do you think? will you give us one more that I may have a chance of deciding?—or perhaps that one again?"

"Indeed," said poor Anne, getting very shy, "I did not know that any one had been listening."

"Perhaps you do not know that I have been listening the whole of the time," answered he.

Several of the party now came up, and saved her the trouble of a reply. There were many requests for another song, and poor Anne never had felt so shy, and so determined never again to believe that people could not talk and listen at the same time.

"Do sing once more, Miss Grey," said Mrs. Cartwright with her fascinating smile.

"And will no one ask *me* to sing?" said

Edward Temple jumping up, and taking the seat Anne had left. "Well then, since Miss Grey will not, I will sing without being asked."

"Oh! do," said Mrs. Cartwright. "That charming 'Eldest Daughter,' or any other of your funny songs;" and Edward Temple was singing and playing in a moment a comic song, acting it at Mrs. Cartwright, who was in fits of laughter; and Anne Grey retired from the scene of danger to enjoy the song of her deliverer at a prudent distance.

The point was gained; she was forgotten. The comic song over, Mrs. Cartwright was in raptures, and "dying to hear another:" she was enchanted that Edward Temple should have thought fit to be amusing for her sake twice in one evening; but Mr. Temple had no idea of flattering Mrs. Cartwright with any more attention. He left the instrument and was talking quietly to Mr. Grey the next minute; and no

one would have supposed it the same person who had been playing a comic part but an instant before for the amusement of a Mrs. Cartwright.

It will be believed that the sociable drive that morning to —— had not passed wholly in silence between Edward Temple and Anne Grey. It had, in fact, been very agreeable. They had conversed a great deal together. He had dropped the tone of satire, and had been quiet and sensible ; and the mutual impression from the graver style of conversation was decidedly favourable.

Edward Temple thought Anne even more intelligent than he had imagined ; and this was saying much. He had been before aware of her simple modesty and amiable disposition, but he could not be aware to its full extent of all below the surface ;—her justness of opinion—her perfect taste—her quick appreciation of

the beautiful in works of art—her unvarying elegance of mind. He had the power of drawing out characters, of interesting people in the right way, and of leading them to speak of their feelings and sentiments. Anne felt quite at ease with him during the drive, and she began to think of him less as the clever, satirical Mr. Temple of society, than as the person whose sentiments she had found, with surprise and pleasure, coinciding with her own. She thought him still, as she had thought him before, more agreeable than any other person she knew.

It seemed impossible to listen to him and not have the impression of hearing that which was new, and yet so true and just, that it did not startle the listener, or seem unnatural. There was nothing heavy in his conversation : the gravest subject might be discussed seriously and at length, and though never treated lightly,

or decked with unbecoming levity, yet it was never with him the dry ponderous thing that most serious conversations become. "In matters of taste how delightful," thought Anne, "to hear him talk. He seemed to think with me, and expressed what I have so often felt. How he leads one into his enthusiasm! It was very strange;" half sighed Anne, as she loosened her hair that night, "that our sentiments should have been so much the same, that after so short an acquaintance he should seem to understand my feelings better than any one I ever knew before."

Lord Stoketon had not yet proposed! He was relying on a few more days at Hadley. Better enjoy the present moment, and make assurance doubly sure. "Should she reject me," thought he. "I wish I knew quite what she thought! Well, I will leave it a day or two."

The breakfast at Hadley the next morning

was, as usual, a sociable and happy meal. Every one seemed in excellent spirits, and Miss Trevor talked and made tea to perfection. It was a lovely day, and another excursion was thought of.

“Will you trust me to drive your ponies again, Lady Hadley?” said Lord Stoketon. “I saw them before breakfast, and they look fresher than ever! They are the best pair of ponies I ever saw—never flagged the whole way. I should like just such a pair if,” *sotto voce* to Sophy, who, as usual, sat next him; “there were a lady to use them. My mother and sisters never drive, they are such cowards.”

The party was settled, and Anne wondered a little whether she should be seated by Mr. Temple again. Yes! she heard from the other end of the table that he meant to go; and something, she thought, he said, about “the arrangement having been perfect yesterday.”

Anne thought she heard this, but Sir Henry Poynton would ask her a question just at the time.

However that drive was fated never to take place. The letters came in. One was given to Mr. Grey—a black seal, and broad black edged paper. Mr. Grey's colour came and went as he opened it. He thought of his two sons, both absent, and fearing for them, it was almost a relief to find that the letter announced the death of his brother-in-law, Mr. Daventry.

The consequence was an immediate departure from Hadley.

Lord Stoketon had time to assure himself that the death of her Uncle was not a matter of grief to Sophy, for neither she, nor Anne, had ever seen him but once, and to try to be satisfied, that at least she was spared this affliction; and Edward Temple had time to admire Anne's look of consideration for poor Sophy—

her total forgetfulness of self—her proper degree of feeling—and her heart-felt exclamation of “poor, poor girl,” as Mr. Daventry’s only daughter was named. Then, as soon as ladies’ maids and footman and coachman could be bustled into activity, and the loss of their dinner, adieus were uttered, and Lord Stoke-ton pressed Sophy’s hand, and muttered something like “God bless you,” and hurried away to hide his feelings; Sir Henry called out to Anne not to forget her old friend, and to hope they should meet again to tell her that other little story; Lady Hadley kissed her affectionately; Edward Temple looked grave, and considerate; they shook hands, and Anne thought he had pressed hers, and she saw he felt for her; good-byes came from the more indifferent portion of the party, and the carriage drove off.

CHAPTER VIII.

WHILST the carriage is conveying the family of the Greys, as rapidly as possible to Weston, whence Mr. Grey is immediately to set off to Mr. Daventry's place, about a hundred miles distant, I must give my reader some little information of Mr. Daventry, and the circumstances attendant on his death.

Mr. Daventry was the husband of an only sister of Mr. Grey's, who had married him against the wishes of her family. Charlotte

Grey, a gentle amiable girl, was bent upon marrying Reginald Daventry, and, like other gentle amiable girls, she was very meek and obedient on all other subjects, and very obstinate on this. Her friends had fears for her happiness, and their fears were realized. She experienced that complete desolation of heart, which springs from the unkindness and neglect of a husband who is loved and obeyed with the same ardour and affection as at the moment when he vowed to love and cherish her in return.

One daughter was born, and Mrs. Daventry died of a broken heart : it was really of a broken heart, although Mr. Daventry did assure himself and his friends that this could not have been the case, as it was notorious she had died of a consumption. Her friends allowed that she did. Mr. Grey, amongst others, allowed it ; but he could not again bear the sight of the

man who had caused her so to die ; nor was it required of him, for Mr. Daventry knew that he deserved to be hated, and he hated Mr. Grey—cordially hated him.

Mr. Grey loved his sister. It was with bitterness of heart that he had seen her the victim of a being such as Reginald Daventry. He had seen it for years, and without the power of averting it. He saw the gentle and affectionate girl, she who had been the playmate of his childhood, growing old with sorrow ; patient, unrepining, loving still : many a bitter hour it had cost him, and if there was a man in the world towards whom he could not exercise the command to ‘ Love thy neighbour as thyself,’ it was to the husband of his sister.

Sometimes he had made an effort for her, but it had failed—partly, as he feared, by his own imprudence. Sometimes, in the indignation of the moment he had departed from the

command of self, which he knew to be the safest conduct for his sister's peace, and it made him a bitter enemy in Reginald Daventry.

When he heard of the birth of a child, he hoped that the gift of this little being might effect a change, but it was a vain hope. It only seemed to add to the evil. It was a girl, and Mr. Daventry wished for a boy. Mrs. Daventry lived for some years after the birth of her child, gradually sinking under disappointment and grief. She too had vainly encouraged a hope, and when this hope was destroyed, she had fondly cherished another, that a boy might be given her, and that he might bring back some little share of her husband's affection ; but disappointment succeeded again, and when, two years after the birth of her daughter, Mrs. Daventry sank into the grave, Mr. Grey could only rejoice through his tears that her sufferings were at an end.

He had seen Mr. Daventry soon after her death—it was a hard task, and Mr. Grey hoped not to be obliged to see him again. He knew that he should not be allowed to be of use to his sister's child; or he would gladly have endured any thing for her sake.

Mr. Daventry had talents, was agreeable in society, was good-looking, and had every outward accomplishment which might excuse Charlotte Grey for having obstinately determined to marry him. But it was on the exterior only that his attractions dwelt; profligate, extravagant, violent-tempered, and proud, comprising in one character the faults of many; such was Reginald Daventry! One redeeming trait at length appeared. He loved his daughter; and to this daughter, whom from an infant Mr. Grey had never beheld, he was now summoned. He forgot the wrong her father had done, and he obeyed the summons, eager

to afford consolation to the poor lonely girl, who had lost her only friend.

When he reached Mr. Daventry's residence, he was received by the medical man, who seemed the only person his illness had summoned near him: no relations, no friends were there, to soothe his sufferings, to regret his loss, and to comfort his daughter.

Shortly after his arrival the door opened, and a maid-servant entered to tell Mr. Grey that her mistress desired to see him. His heart beat as he thought of beholding his niece—of seeing perhaps a likeness of his poor sister.

He followed the servant, and in a few minutes he was in the presence of Charlotte Daventry. But it was not the youthful representative of the Charlotte Daventry whom he had loved: there was no resemblance to affect him. It was Reginald Daventry whom she

resembled, and the likeness was so strong that any other moment, Mr. Grey would have recoiled with a shudder. A burst of grief followed his entrance. Mr. Grey felt for her, and the recollection of her being his sister's child overpowered him. He wept with her; he tried to soothe her, but she drew away, and only burst into fresh grief.

At length she composed herself, and in a low voice said, "All is left to your care. Here is a paper, it is my father's." She almost shrieked as she uttered his name. "All directions are in this; take it, Sir. You will leave me now;" and Mr. Grey saw that it would be only cruel to stay with her.

He left the room, and as he closed the door he heard the cries of suppressed agony bursting forth—he heard the screams of uncontrolled grief, and he never forgot the horror of those sounds.

He hesitated whether to return. He felt it might be worse than useless; but it was too dreadful! and he determined, at least, to try. He went back and opened the door. There she lay stretched on the sofa, her arms tossing abroad, whilst she uttered almost shrieks of agony. His entrance aroused her. She started up, and seeing Mr. Grey, screamed with horror, and throwing forward her arms, pointed towards the door.

“I asked to be left,” said she. “There is your way.”

Mr. Grey shuddered as he saw her look of repugnance, and he felt, indeed, that his presence was useless. He withdrew to another room, and there examined the papers which she had placed in his hands. One of these was a letter addressed to himself by Mr. Daventry. It was a dying appeal. It asked pardon for his past conduct, recommended his daughter

to Mr. Grey's compassion, and requested, as the highest favour he could grant, that he would take the poor fatherless girl under his roof. He left directions that Mr. Grey should be remunerated as far as his daughter's means would allow; but the extravagance which, in his letter he professed to bewail, had reduced his fortune to barely a competency; and Charlotte would scarcely have the means to live, as became her station, if Mr. Grey would not, in charity, allow her a home with his daughters.

He had not constituted him legally her guardian, but he appealed to his compassion to bestow on her the care of one.

The letter was powerfully worded; it was a strong appeal to the feelings. Reginald Daventry was a clever man, and he made use of his talents where it was necessary. His appeal was not made in vain. Mr. Grey felt, as he read his last letter, that he might perhaps have

done him injustice. Charlotte Daventry was told that, if she felt equal to so early a removal, she should return with Mr. Grey, to Weston, the day after the funeral, that she might henceforward look upon himself and Mrs. Grey as a second father and mother, and Weston as her home.

The offer was accepted with gratitude. On their second meeting she had been perfectly composed, and asked pardon for the vehement betrayal of her grief on their first interview. "Her affliction," she said, "had bewildered her." She thanked Mr. Grey with the warmest expressions of gratitude for his kindness—looked more than she expressed, and said, as she pressed his hands in both of hers, "All the duty and affection of a child to a parent I shall owe you, and you will never fail to receive all that the warmest gratitude can ensure. If I fail—if I seem perverse—if I am displeasing to you,"

her voice faltered ; “if I fail to inspire you with affection—will you think of my poor mother ?” The tears fell, and she could say no more. Mr. Grey pressed her to him, kissed her cheek, which was wet with his tears as well as her own, and faltered out an assurance of unceasing care to supply to her the place of a parent.

Feelings such as those displayed by Charlotte Daventry, in this little scene, gave Mr. Grey real satisfaction. He hoped that, although resembling her father in face, the Charlotte Daventry now about to enter his family, and to be the companion of his daughters, was in other respects like the Charlotte Daventry whom he had once so fondly loved as Charlotte Grey.

But once or twice, during the days which elapsed before the funeral, was he painfully reminded of her likeness to her father. When they had been talking together, when she seemed

deeply impressed with his kindness, she would suddenly burst into a wild fit of grief, and, as he tried to console her, she would turn on him a look, such as her father could have given—would shrink from him, and rush out of the room.

The funeral at length, (and what an at length did it appear !) the funeral at length was over ; and Charlotte Daventry, composed and almost cheerful, was conveyed from her home to become one of a new family—to leave behind all that she had ever loved, and to place herself amongst entire strangers, dependent on their kindness, and I might almost say, their bounty.

Mr. Grey would hardly have believed it possible, had he been told a month back, that he should now be seated in a carriage with his niece Charlotte Daventry by his side journeying towards Weston to introduce her there as

to her home—that she should have been confided to him by Reginald Daventry himself—that he should experience no repugnance to the charge, and that he should even feel almost in charity with this very Reginald Daventry : yet so it was.

We will leave the character of Charlotte Daventry to time, and the ingenuity of the reader to discover ; and once more allude to Mr. Daventry.

It has been said that he had one good trait, and that one was love for his daughter. How he came to love seems an enigma. Charlotte Daventry had seemed born to be disliked by him ; first, because she was a girl, and he had wished for a boy ; and next, because he had never been known to love anything. She had begun life with a positive stock of hatred from him. The baby was obliged to be smuggled out of the way, and all doors kept scrupulously

closed, for fear “papa,” or “Mr. Daventry,” as he was called, should hear her voice. She was eight years old before he had ever spoken to her, except to utter a cross word, or a scold; not the gentle, or cross word of a mama, who professes not to spoil her darling children. No, the being, come to years of discretion, might have trembled to hear the words which saluted the youthful Charlotte’s ear.

Yet, after the age of eight, a change took place. The child had unconsciously gone the right way to work. She had been in the room when Mr. Daventry was speaking to some one, had understood what been said, and made some extraordinary remark. The father had been struck. “That child will be a wonder,” said he; and from that hour he made her his constant companion, and between father and child, as the child grew into maturity, not a thought or a secret was withheld from each other.

Charlotte Daventry was in her eighteenth year when her father died. There was little to attract attention in her appearance. She was rather tall, her hair and eyes were dark, she was pale, and had no peculiar brilliancy of complexion. Her figure was good, and she had fine eyes. She could lay claim to no other positive beauty, yet those who were often in her society, and had conversed with her, would have awarded her still higher pretensions to personal attractions.

It will be thought extraordinary that having been the friend and confidante of such a father, Charlotte should have had any good qualities, and yet the Greys would have told you that she was a good, amiable girl. Still more extraordinary does it seem that Mr. Daventry should leave his daughter to the care of Mr. Grey,—leave her wholly dependent for kind-

ness on him towards whom he felt as towards an enemy.

Reginald Daventry had hated Mr. Grey : hated him for his interference on behalf of Mrs. Daventry : hated him because he knew that his sister had been cruelly used by him—knew that Mr. Grey must despise and abhor him—hated him because he felt his superiority in virtue—hated him for his prosperity ; even for his moderation in prosperity ; even for his forbearance towards himself. He detested him no less for his interfering so little, than for his interfering at all : he was irritated at his shewing so little indignation, when conscience, that busy sting within, told him it must be felt—he hated him even because he was the brother of the poor, patient, amiable being he had injured ; and yet he left his only child, the only being whom he loved, to the care of this very person !

And why was it ? could it be that the ap-

proach of death had softened the heart of even Reginald Daventry?—that he repented?

Mr. Grey hoped it might be so; in charity he believed what he hoped, and as the poor orphan was seated beside him on her journey from the home of her affection, from the remains of her father—he felt that that father might be forgiven—that he might have done him an injustice—that he might, indeed, be worthy of forgiveness, and from his heart he did forgive him.

Let Mr. Grey believe as in charity he hoped, but for us, we must look behind the scenes; we must hear the father in his hours of unreserve. Let us hear him when, weakened by illness, he is seated with his child conversing in the freedom of unrestrained confidence.

Often they talked long and vehemently together. Sometimes he would tell of his hatred to Mr. Grey. One day he had been more than

usually violent. Charlotte had listened and learnt almost to hate the man whom her father so abhorred.

“Charlotte,” said he, after a bitter invective against Mr. Grey, “tell me that you hate this man—that you will hate him : tell me, do you feel that you could love, or even endure, the man who has wronged your father?”

“Oh no, no !” said Charlotte. “I cannot love the man who has done you wrong. Dear father, be satisfied,” and she clung around him to quiet his emotion.

“If there is a man I hate in the world,” continued he, “it is William Grey—Charlotte,” addressing his daughter, and becoming calm in his manner, whilst he fixed his eyes on her. “Charlotte you will have much in your power. Remember my words.—You will have much in your power,” said he, speaking slowly and seriously, earnestly looking at her as if he wished

her to weigh each word. "I cannot live long. I have that about me which must soon end in death. Charlotte you will be left to *his* care—the care of this very man." He held her hand: he looked at her again. The expression of that look could not be mistaken: he meant it should not. It was hate—deadly hate—revenge!

It *was* understood. He saw that it was, and he withdrew his gaze, and unclasped her hand, which he had held firmly grasped in his as he spoke, "You will live with him, Charlotte," said he, in an almost mild tone: "yes; you will have much in your power." He paused. A smile came across his face, and curled his lip. "Charlotte, did you ever hear of the man who warmed a serpent in his bosom? and then—" he paused—"and then—what did it do, my child?"

Charlotte looked at her father with intelligence, and the smile was repeated on her coun-

tenance. “It stung him,” said she, in a quiet tone. It was enough — father and daughter understood one another.

On another occasion he spoke to his daughter of her prospects. “Charlotte,” said he, “your ambition must be to make a great marriage, and if you chance to fix on one whose affections have been given—who is the object of love to some fond, foolish girl,”—he lowered his voice, and his eyes beamed on her with intelligence — “your dearest companion and *cousin*—let this be the man—let him be the object of your ambition. Were I alive then—did I see you successful—then I should say you had made a great marriage—you had fulfilled your duty.”

CHAPTER IX

WE will now return with Mr. Grey and Charlotte Daventry to Weston. A letter had informed Mrs. Grey of the circumstances that had occurred, and that she must prepare herself for a new inmate in the family.

Mrs. Grey was an excellent woman, and very unselfish and unworldly where her heart was touched ; but unluckily on this occasion it was obstinately bent on not being touched. She had seen very little and had heard a great deal

of Mr. Daventry, and all she had heard made her think him, and not unjustly, “a shocking man !”

“So very wicked to be so uncivil to Mr. Grey, and to use his poor wife so ill ! Such a good woman as she was, for she was Mr. Grey’s sister, and her sister-in-law ! she was sure he was a very shocking man, and it was so provoking of him to die just then. Certainly his death was no loss—on the contrary it was a very good thing.” (Good Mrs. Grey !) “If he had only waited two days later no body would have missed him, except his daughter, and even she would do much better without him.”

If thus Mrs. Grey could so ill reconcile herself to an unavoidable evil, it will be imagined how ill she could submit to one which might have been avoided. When she read Mr. Grey’s letter announcing the intelligence of Charlotte Daventry’s being left to his care, and that in

less than a week she was coming so reside in their family, nothing could exceed her dismay.

That Mr. Daventry, that shocking man, should have thought of leaving his girl to Mr. Grey's care—that the daughter of this shocking man—a girl whom she had never seen, and whom she was sure was as shocking as her father, should be coming to live in the house with them, and to share the advantages of her own daughters, and all without asking her advice or opinion! It was monstrous!

No wonder that she did not bear it quite heroically, and that when Mr. Grey arrived at Weston with Charlotte Daventry, the pleasure of seeing her dear good husband again could not quite put her into a good humour, or make her feel very cordial towards his companion.

It is true Charlotte Daventry's black dress did something, and Mr. Grey's pale, tired look did a great deal more, and then the kind heart,

and the affectionate disposition began to have their sway.

She began to feel about Charlotte Daventry that “poor thing, she was certainly very much to be pitied;”—that, “she could not help having had such a father;” and that “she seemed a quiet inoffensive girl, not to be compared to her own daughters in beauty;” and before the evening was over, she had shed some tears for her, and kindly taken her up to her room when she expressed a wish to retire for the night, offered her some gruel or white wine whey, because she thought she must have caught cold on the journey—had actually fetched her own peculiar bottle of camphor julep, and had sent her own maid to assist in undressing her, and then Mrs. Grey began to think that it was not so foolish a thing in Mr. Grey to have brought her, and felt that there was something not so unpleasant in being kind, and in giving up her

peculiar bottle of camphor julep and her own maid.

She felt like a heroine, and called Charlotte Daventry 'poor thing,' for we do not know exactly how long afterwards.

Various were the feelings called forth in the different members of the Grey family by the events of the last week. William and Henry were both at home. William had been called away from a pleasant party, and as he was not acquainted with Mr. Daventry, and could not like what he had heard of him, he may stand excused for in some measure sharing Mrs. Grey's feelings on the subject.

Henry might perhaps be excused for contrary feeling. He did not know 'old Daventry,' 'he supposed he would be no loss,' and as by his death he was brought home from school, and no one was sorry, he did not see why he should be so. To tell the truth he was

rather glad, for he wanted to see Anne, and ask about Hadley, and also to beg she would get permission for him to belong to the cricket-club.

Sophy might be expected to enter fully into Mrs. Grey's feelings, and she was vexed, not so much for the loss of Lord Stoketon's proposal, as for the loss of the Archery, and of the sight of Captain Herbert, "just to decide what she felt concerning him," and "whether she could, with a free conscience, give her hand to Lord Stoketon."

As to Anne, she alone, of all the family, felt as Mr. Grey had done. She had been very sorry to leave Hadley, but selfishness stopped there, and all her interest was given to her poor cousin, all her pity was bestowed on her, all her hope that her father might soothe the orphan's sorrows.

When Mr. Grey's letter arrived, giving a favourable account of her manner, and telling

of her distress, and her expressions of gratitude, Anne felt a still warmer interest. She rejoiced that the poor orphan was to come among them, and hoped that she might be able to comfort her. No repining thought, that but for Mr. Daventry's death she should have enjoyed two more days of Edward Temple's society, came across her mind: all considerations of self were forgotten in the fear that her father would be worn and fatigued by his painful duties, and in the wish to sooth her poor deserted cousin.

She anxiously expected her arrival, and no voice was so kind as Anne Grey's to welcome the fatherless Charlotte Daventry, no hand so readily extended, no tear so ready to flow, or so restrained from flowing, lest it should affect the poor sufferer for whom it would have fallen — no attention so unobtrusive, yet so watchful, and unceasing — and

the poor sobbing Charlotte felt it to be so as she was left alone in her chamber that first sad night, when placed alone among strangers, and strangers who, as she knew, disliked and despised her father.

We pass over a few months, and we shall find Charlotte Daventry comfortably established at Weston, the family there ceasing to feel as if any thing remarkable had occurred, and Charlotte herself showing but few traces of grief.

Mr. and Mrs. Grey had begun to think of her as a good, quiet girl.

Mr. Grey had again settled peaceably to the enjoyment of his books and arm-chair, and sometimes wondered to himself whether all that he had seen of Charlotte Daventry, on his first introduction, were not a

dream; and then he resumed his books, and forgot to wonder. He was always kind and affectionate to her, but, as he saw that Mrs. Grey and his daughters were so likewise, he did not trouble himself to be peculiarly attentive; but Anne received several extra kisses for her never-failing consideration for her cousin.

Mrs. Grey had thought that Charlotte was a very good girl, and that it was very good of Mr. Grey and herself to have given her a home, and not unpleasant to themselves, as she was “so useful and good tempered, and so handy, and never seemed to mind doing any thing for any one.”

William said that Charlotte “was a good-humoured girl, after all, and not a bore; that she had a good *tournure*—prodigious fine eyes, and would be really handsome if she had a better complexion;” and he was sufficiently

impressed with the respect due to her good qualities, to demur in asking her to ring the bell, and always said, "May I trouble you"—or, "I'll thank you to ring the bell, as you are near it;" and even made a sort of apology for taking her seat, or her book. Charlotte seemed to think it quite right she should give up her book, or her seat to her cousin William, and ring the bell, near it or not, and William liked her as a good useful girl.

Henry said she was excellent fun sometimes—avowed that she walked very well, was a famous hand at battledore and shuttlecock, and he was sure could play at cricket if she would try; he must say that sometimes he almost liked her better than Sophy, for Sophy had grown such a fine lady. Still she was nothing to Anne, but then who was?

"I wish, with all my heart, Sophy were married," continued he, "to some fine fellow

with four-in-hand, and plenty of riding horses ; one to spare always for friends you know, Anne ! And then what fun we should have here at home. You would be Miss Grey, and Rover might come into the drawing-room just now and then—you would allow that Anne ? and you would not mind a little whistling outside the house or even perhaps along the passage, and through the hall, when I was in capital spirits ?”

To return to the opinions formed of Charlotte Daventry, it is sufficient to say that Anne loved her and still felt pity for her, and that Sophy entrusted her with some of her secrets.

What Charlotte Daventry thought of her relations it is useless to say. She appeared contented, and as happy as her recent affliction would admit. She seemed very willing to love and to be loved by them all, and to consider them superior to herself.

It will be believed that the visit to Hadley was sometimes talked of by Sophy and Anne, and that Mrs. Grey had neither forgotten to think nor to speak of Lord Stoketon, nor every now and then to be angry with poor Mr. Daventry; for though she now constantly appended the ‘poor’ to his name, as the weeks passed on, and no letter franked ‘Stoketon’ arrived, it was hard to suppose she could help lamenting that he had not deferred his death for a day or two.

Moreover, with all her ingenuity (and Mrs. Grey was an ingenious woman), she could not exactly foresee how they were to meet again. She thought of several places, and asked Mr. Grey several times whether he did not think it likely they should meet Lord Stoketon on such or such an occasion? but Mr. Grey never would say more than “I don’t know, my dear;” and if, not satisfied with that matter of fact assertion of

inferior foresight, she urged for a better answer, she only obtained "I really cannot say, for I have heard nothing about Lord Stoketon, and I know nothing of his friends and acquaintance."

Mrs. Grey was really justifiable in saying to herself, sometimes, "How provoking Mr. Grey is!" for he ought to have been anxious about Lord Stoketon, as he believed that Sophy was not indifferent to him, and though thoughts and wonders and guesses were of no avail, he should have thought and wondered and guessed to a certain extent. His daughter's future happiness was in question, and yet he would be blind and deaf, and eat his dinner, and read his books, and be healthy and blooming, and let poor Mrs. Grey fidget alone, and run the risk of having to advertise for an appetite, and a lost shade of vermillion, without sharing in one single fraction of her fidget!

Mr. Grey was in fact too easy and indolent.

I have to relate what Sophy and Anne said and thought about Hadley, and whether Anne made any confidences ! whether the name of Edward Temple was mentioned, and whether Anne confessed, with many a blush and many a sigh, the possession of one interesting relic to be treasured up, and looked at, and—(shall we say it ?)—kissed ! the possession of a corner of a newspaper, which had been actually watched from between the agonizing pressure of his finger and thumb—the torn sheet of paper on which his very hand had traced, with manly elegance, these words ; ‘ My dear Sir,’ and had left it because he thought ‘ My dear Sir,’ not dear enough to be worthy of a letter ; or perhaps, still more valuable, the very pen with which he had written.

Did Anne Grey make any such confession ? no, no, she had none to make : she was

not a girl to preserve relics—to treasure up bits of paper that were not meant to be treasured up. Alas! she was never intended for a heroine!

It must be owned that she thought of Edward Temple with interest, and whenever her spirits were particularly good, and she looked forward to future plans, and probabilities of happiness, the figure of Edward Temple was always supplied with an exalted pedestal in the galleries, or gardens of her castles in the air. She never forgot that there was such a person when she indulged in pleasing reveries, and she wondered, with no little interest, whether she should ever meet him again.

But still she had no confidences to make, and she was quite ready to listen to Sophy; to wish and hope and conjecture and advise; to repeat over and over again the same wishes, hopes, and conjectures, without a single impatient look,

a single shuffle of the chair, or wistful glance towards the window. She patiently listened to the oft-repeated words of 'I really have a great regard for Lord Stoketon,' and 'do not really care for Captain Herbert,' and 'did you see what a nice open carriage Lord Stoketon had? He said he got it because he thought his sisters would like it. What a good brother he must be! He says that Alford is a beautiful place, just the size of Hadley, and there is an excellent conservatory, and it is in a very good neighbourhood. I wonder whether we shall meet him again, Anne?"

To all such remarks, as often as they were repeated, did Anne reply with the same unwearied interest. She thought it natural that Sophy should require her to do so, and she wished her to speak of her feelings, for as her opinions were not always consistent, she hoped to be useful in correcting the errors into which she

occasionally fell. She wished that Lord Stoketon should be prized for something better than his rank and fortune, and by leading Sophy to compare his sincere attachment and real virtues, with the false and frippery character, the dangling, exaggerated passion of Captain Herbert, she hoped from such a comparison, that Sophy would learn to prize and love the virtues of the one, as placed against the faults and tinsel follies of the other. In the one case to make her love the virtues themselves from attachment to the person to whom they belonged—in the other to make her dislike the person himself from dislike to the faults of which he was possessed.

And this was not so difficult a task. Human frailty was on Anne's side, for rank and fortune were with the virtues—poverty and insignificance with the faults; and even human frailty, as a means, may be rendered available in the attainment of human virtue.

Sophy began to speak and think highly of domestic virtues, of the charm of warm-heartedness, of the value of steady principles, the comparative superiority of honest sincerity and manly bluntness, over the studied softness and the heartless selfishness of the finished coxcomb; and, fortunately, the blunt, manly character had a title, a fortune, a house in Town and Country, and a charming carriage; and the finished coxcomb had nothing but one small gig—one large trotting horse, besides his hunters,—one small boy, and one great and highly prized self.

So while Sophy Grey holds the balance, up flies Captain Herbert in the scale, lighter than air; whilst quietly and easily sits my Lord Stoketon resting on the ground, and wealth and rank, and a warm and constant heart, are at her feet.

Ah! Sophy Grey—happy, happy woman!

Acknowledge and confess your happiness.—Prize the gift of that heart—It is gilded and titled, but never mind! You need not be so very disinterested, for you are not a heroine!

But now that Sophy is in a proper frame of mind to accept all these good things, there remains a difficulty—Is Lord Stoketon so very constant? How is this to be ascertained?

We must diffuse the genial spirit of invitation, we must inspire some of the many cyphers who contribute to our good neighbourhood, with a propensity to distribute those little airy messages made up of ‘May I have the pleasure,’ and ‘It will give us much pleasure,’ &c. We must wish that the stable-yard at Weston should ring with the clatter of horses’ hoofs, and Mr. and Mrs. Grey be kept in constant occupation breaking open seals, and taking from their envelopes the smooth scented enclosure, filled with sweet and honied words, still sweeter

than the perfumed paper which conveyed them.

This must be our wish, that thus Sophy Grey may have an opportunity of meeting Lord Stoketon again.

CHAPTER X.

WE must suppose that, amongst the many good neighbours whom the Greys possessed, there were not a few who visited Weston when it was known that Mr. Daventry had left an only girl to the care of Mr. Grey.

It was impossible that any one could give information on the subject of Charlotte Daventry, as no one had as yet seen her ; and though many conjectured that she was pale and interesting ; and others that she was quite the con-

trary, and had shewn remarkable hardness of heart; still there were none who could speak from fact, and all were anxious to judge for themselves, and see how poor Mr. Grey looked under the infliction of a niece.

All were eager to find out whether the stories were true of his having at first refused the charge, till Mr. Daventry, on his death-bed, holding Mr. Grey's hand in his, had made him faithfully promise to do so on pain—some said, of being visited by his ghost,—some said, merely of a dying man's curse;—whether it were true that William Grey was already desperately in love with her, and that they were to be married as soon as her mourning was over;—whether it was true, that the orphan was plunged in such deep affliction that she had scarcely spoken, and never smiled since, and that she intended wearing mourning all her life, and had made a determination never to

marry—but it will be an endless task to tell all the reasons why people were anxious to call at Weston.

One other will suffice, and that was, simply to ascertain whether she were pretty or ugly. But this was a question upon which no two people could agree, even after having seen her; and for some time the neighbourhood of Weston was left in doubt whether Miss Daventry were a beauty or not.

The earliest visitor at Weston, after the ordinary period of seclusion had elapsed, was Lady Dowton; who, though such a sad invalid, contrived once or twice in [the year, on great occasions to get out to see her ‘dear friends,’ who had been ‘so kind to her.’ This was one of the great occasions which called Lady Dowton forth from her luxurious sofa, and the first of the carriages that drove up to the door at Weston was hers.

As she moved languidly into the room, her eyes were anxiously cast around to discover the interesting orphan, but, alas! nothing was to be seen but Mrs. Grey, with a large work-basket before her, William Grey's long legs stretching forth from the mysteries of an arm-chair, the back of which was turned towards the door, and Anne Grey seated at her drawing table with brush in hand.

Lady Dowton was disappointed, but still, having been admitted was something; and as Sophy was likewise out of the room, she hoped that the cousins were together, and that before long they might both appear.

At any rate she could hear something about her, and she could learn many particulars, which could not be learnt in her presence. "Ah! dear Mrs. Grey, how are you? I have felt so much for you!" but Lady Dowton spoke her feelings doubtfully, for she was not

sure which line to take—whether the Greys were to be pitied or not, for the loss of a man whom they never saw, and whose character had been notoriously unamiable ; so she took the safest course, and threw a good deal of feeling and commiseration into her manner. If it so chanced that it was not required in the exact manner supposed ; still there was cause for pity in Sophy and Anne's having been kept out of gaiety for so many weeks, and she continued, “ I have felt so much for you all.”

Mrs. Grey's unconscious, comfortable look of undisturbed contentment and peace of mind, whilst she stared a very little as if forgetting exactly why she was to be pitied, set Lady Dowton right.

“ You are very kind,” said Mrs. Grey smiling, and Lady Dowton saw there was no cause for any more pity, except for herself.”

“ Ah ! I am glad to see you so well. It is such an age since I have seen you, that I really feared you might not have continued well all the time.”

“ My mother is not subject to bad health, and never was better in her life,” said William Grey, who disliked Lady Downton, and her tiresome complaints. He loved to give her blunt answers and cut her short whenever he could. “ I hope Sir John is well ? ” said he, knowing Sir John to be the least interesting subject to her Ladyship.

“ Ah ! thank you—so kind in you ! He is perfectly well—but, my dear Anne, do let me see you and hear you speak,” said she turning the subject, and extending a hand to Anne, who had been vainly hoping to continue her drawing unmolested. “ Do let me hear a little of yourself, now your poor old friend has made the effort of coming to see you :

indeed it is a sad effort; but for the sake of such kind friends I would not have attempted it. So then you have got a new companion, poor thing!" glancing towards William. for that story might be true; but no change in his colour appeared, and it must be decidedly contradicted. "I shall be the first to do it," thought she.

Anne supposed that Lady Dowton spoke of her cousin, and said every thing proper about the pleasure of having her for a companion.

"I suppose she does not yet appear in society!" said Lady Dowton.

"I don't know," said Anne. "We have never yet seen any one excepting our own relations; but I do not suppose that Charlotte would be afraid of being seen, though she would not go out at present. She and Sophy are just set off on a long walk."

“Not afraid of being seen,” thought Lady Downton. “It was said ironically — Depend upon it she is a bold dashing girl, with no feeling whatever; and Anne does not like her. She and Sophy are gone for a long walk, so there is no chance of my seeing her. I may as well make a short visit, and I shall have the more time for writing.”

“You have heard, I suppose, my dear Mrs. Grey,” said she, “that some new friends are to be established this week at Chatterton — Mr. and Mrs. Foley, and their family. Charming people, I hear — She was Lord Gleddon’s daughter. A sweet woman! My sad health will scarcely permit me to make their acquaintance. I am nearly cut out from society, you know; but Anne and your dear Sophy will, I am certain, be as good to me as they always are. You will call on the family, of course, when they come, and then you will think of

me, and bring me any little amusement in your power. It is always interesting to hear the conversation of new people. Oh! I am so fatigued!"

"Try this chair, Lady Dowton," said William, with the broadest, bluntest, most healthy tone, properly got up for the occasion. "You would be rested directly. Whenever I am tired with a long day's shooting, I try this chair, and it always rests me sooner than any thing."

"Ah!" said poor Lady Dowton, trying not to show that she was mortified, "I know it is impossible for those in rude health to understand our feelings. Thank you, thank you. You are very kind, but pray sit down again. Indeed I must be going soon. You were staying at a pleasant house in the autumn, Mr. Grey. I heard of you from a friend of mine who was there. You know her—Mrs. Acton."

“Yes,” said William.

“She is a great friend of the Grahams’ too, you know,” continued she.

“Yes,” said William again, re-seating himself.

“You have heard, of course,” continued Lady Dowton, “that Jane Graham is going to be married?”

“No, by Jove,” said William, starting up.

The insulting offer of the arm-chair was revenged.

“Jane Graham going to be married! I don’t believe a word of it!” Then recollecting himself, and sinking back again in the arm chair, he thought “What a fool I am to expose myself to the greatest tale-bearer in the kingdom!”

“I make a rule never to believe any thing I hear, you know, Lady Dowton,” said he,

with his most good-humoured, civil, and gentle manner. “I forget, did you say who it was to?”

“No, I did not, for indeed I hardly know whether it would be justifiable, as I heard it from one who is a friend of the family. However, there is no harm in saying before friends, and you too, Mr. Grey, are also a friend of the family! It is Sir Frederic Norton. But I really am paying you an unconscionable visit. May I trouble you, Mr. Grey?” and William rung the bell, and pulled it so violently that the spring never recovered it, and the bell-hanger was sent for the next day.

“My carriage, if you please.” Joyful sound! and then came the ‘good-byes,’ and the “do tell your dear sister to come over and see me, very soon; and you must come, and if Miss Daventry would like the walk, and to see Westhorpe — I should be most

happy — She need not be afraid of not being quite quiet. Good-bye, my love to Sophy;” and then, when fairly out of the room, William’s indignation burst forth.

“An odious, malicious, scandal-bearing woman! I don’t believe a word she says, after all; though sometimes she may hit on the truth—but I don’t believe it!” walking and half talking to himself. “She came, you know, just to ferret out all the news she could about Charlotte Daventry. I am heartily glad you were both so unsatisfactory, and that the girl was out! That, and your spirit of reserve, were happy accidents. Odious woman!” and William strode out of the room, but soon strode in again, with a glove dangling in his hand.

“Oh! by the way, Anne, I wish to goodness, you would mend this glove for me. I have not had a glove I can wear, for the last month! and as to Watson or Hickman

doing any thing for one, or doing any thing, indeed, that they ought to do, it is out of the question. Where all my gloves are gone I cannot think! ——— Make haste! Why, what a time a glove takes mending! I could have done it myself in half the time. I would not have asked you, if I thought I should have been kept waiting here all this time!” William was not in the best of humours: but we will hope that a long walk, with a holeless glove on his hand, neatly mended by the small, and nimble fingers of his sister Anne, would help to restore him to his usual equanimity.

CHAPTER XI.

WE will leave William Grey to drive away his ill-humour as best he might ; that we may relate a part of the conversation which took place between Sophy and her cousin, in that ill-fated walk which deprived Lady Dowton of the inestimable advantage of being the first to judge whether Miss Daventry were a beauty or not.

“ How I delight in a good long walk,” said Sophy, in setting off with the determination

to take one, and to walk steadily and perseveringly to the end of it. "One is so apt to feel stupid if one sits at work, or at reading, or drawing for a whole morning, without a walk to refresh one's intellects."

"Yes, very apt," said Charlotte. "But then I have more occasion for it than you, because you know I do not draw, or play, or do all those delightful things which you and Anne do. At least, though I play and draw a little, it is so ill, that it gives me no pleasure. Not that I thought so much of it before I came here, and learnt how much better people could play and draw than I could."

"Oh ! I dare say in a little time," said Sophy, stepping on briskly and *con spirito*, for she was not displeased at hearing her own praises, "you will perform in both ways quite as well as Anne and I."

"Oh ! do you think so ?" said Charlotte in

an animated tone, and looking towards Sophy's self-satisfied face,—“ Do you think I ever could? I should so like it! I do sometimes so very much wish that I was a little more like you—and Anne,” added she, as if it were an after thought, added because it was proper to do so.

“ I have not the least doubt about it, Charlotte,” said Sophy, still walking *con spirito*, but with a more stately air, and a smile widening the line of bright red lip, and displaying the pearly row of teeth within,—lighting up the bright blue eyes, and touching even the small well-formed nose with a spirituality—an expression—to which noses are not commonly allowed to lay any claim, even in a novel, and which nothing but a little delicate flattery could have imparted.

However, Sophy Grey's eyes, nose, and mouth did, one or all of them, separately or conjointly, give an expression of serene self-

complacency as she stepped lightly along with Charlotte Daventry at her side.

Charlotte saw it. She looked once when Sophy was not regarding her, and a smile illumined the peculiar depths of those dark, searching eyes. The glance was quickly withdrawn, the face grave again, and the eyes quiet.

“You are so good-natured about me,” said she, “I cannot say how much I feel it—how often I think of it! It seems so strange that you should take any notice of me. I never thought when I came, and first saw you—when I looked round the room and saw how nice you looked! so different to what I knew that I was—I never thought you would be with me as you are, and that I should learn not to be so much frightened at you. I told you once before, how beautiful I thought you, and how I picked you out from all the party to be the one to be frightened at, because I thought you looked

so superior to all ; and now, indeed, I do not know why I am less alarmed, for I think you much superior to what I did then—to what I could do before I knew more of you ;” she paused a moment, “and do you really think that I shall ever grow at all like you ?”

“Why, I dare say you will, if you mean as to drawing and music, as soon as you like : you will know quite as much of it as we do, and I dare say will surpass us. But remember Charlotte,” said she laughing, “I shall not endure that. I shall not like you to do anything better than I can myself ! My vanity will not bear that at all !”

“Ah ! you are so droll and nice,” said Charlotte, looking at her with such a pleased expression. “Do you know, I am going to make a confession, Sophy, though I don’t know whether I should, and yet there is no harm, because I know you will not repeat it, and I really

could not help what I am going to confess. If I am very wrong, perhaps you will tell me, and I will try to change if I can. It is your good-nature, and something so attractive and dear in your manner that, perhaps, makes me speak to you differently to what I should to others, and what I have to tell is—you will not be angry?"

"No, certainly," said Sophy.

"Well, what I have to tell is, that somehow—I do feel to like you better than—you will not be angry, shall you?"

"Oh, no, foolish girl to think I should," said Sophy eagerly, yet caressingly.

"I do feel, somehow, I like you better than Anne. I tried to like her as well, and she is so kind, and it seems so ungrateful!—but still I do like you the best, though I try not!—but I do love you so much—but I am sure you are angry? You must think me so wicked!" said she eagerly, to Sophy.

“No, indeed,” was her reply. “I do not think you wrong, and, indeed, I ought to be too much flattered to feel it wrong if it really were,” continued she laughing. “But I do not see anything so very wrong in it, especially as you cannot help it; and there is no harm in your telling me your feeling: you may be sure that I shall not repeat it again. As to not liking Anne the best, at present, she is so much more reserved than I am, so much more serious, perhaps, that you were not likely to do so quite as soon. You will be quite sure to like her as much and more than you do me, when you know more of us.” Charlotte did not answer directly, nor say she thought it probable. Perhaps she did not feel that it was likely, and therefore did not wish to hurt the sisterly feelings of Sophy by expressing her thoughts.

After a short pause, she said, that she was glad Sophy had not thought her very wrong,

and that she was relieved by having told her, for she did not know whether it would be right or not to speak on such a subject; and then, as they walked on, Sophy felt that Charlotte Daventry was an uncommonly nice, open-hearted girl. "She is very simple and childish," thought she, "but she is such a good creature!" Who does not know what 'a good creature' means? That being so exceedingly flattering and useful to ourselves, who never interferes, but always adds to our pleasures if she can; sacrificing self to our interests; and for all her favours never laying us under any obligations!

It is a charming character, and happy are those who happen to enumerate a good creature amongst their relations, friends, or dependants! "She is amusing," thought Sophy, "and we are very fortunate in having such a companion, when she might have been so disagreeable!"

It will be supposed that Lady Dowton's was not the only visit to the Greys. Visitor, after visitor, succeeded, and Sophy began to think it was rather pleasant to have been forced into retirement for a short time, for the sake of the welcome contrast.

In all the numerous visits many agreeable things were said and listened to. Sophy was, sometimes, told that she was going to marry Lord Stoketon—sometimes laughed at for keeping it so secret. Sometimes told, less openly, that “she had been heard of”—that there were various little rumours about a certain gentleman—that his name began with an S—, but that he had sisters whose name began with a different letter—was asked when it would be?—was told that she ought to pity poor Captain Herbert—was called a cruel girl—was asked after Mr. Temple—was told that he had been known to say, that he thought Miss Grey a

charming person! and he never had been known to say so of any girl before—what could be more pleasant than to hear all this?

When her flattering friends were gone, she began to think whether Mr. Temple had not seemed to admire her. It had not exactly struck her before; but then, she had been a good deal occupied with Lord Stoketon; she thought, upon reflection, that he must have been an admirer. It was very evident, and she only wished that she had given him a little more encouragement.

Anne was present at all these attacks on Sophy, and she sat quietly by without receiving her share. Her visitors did not know that she had been seated on the barouche-box with one of their heroes! She heard Sophy accused of having captivated Edward Temple, and her heart had beat quicker than usual, and the colour mounted to her face, as if (foolish girl

as she thought herself) it had been she and not Sophy, who had been guilty of such a thing.

Her heart beat still quicker as she heard what he had said of her sister. "How stupid I must have been never to have perceived his admiration!" thought she, and she felt very quiet, and steady, and a something rather heavy and cold about her heart.

She remembered that he had certainly seemed to admire Sophy at first, and one day she had caught him attentively observing them both as they stood together, and their mutual book of drawings was being looked at. He had come up to the place where they stood, and she had been so nervous that she had turned away her head just as he approached. He had spoken to Sophy. He had evidently come from the other side of the room to speak to her, but Lord Stoketon had attracted her attention at the time, which made her apparently uncivil to him, and he had walked back again.

She saw, on thinking it over, that he had probably admired Sophy, and this accounted at once for his good-nature to herself. She felt satisfied, but yet, not quite so much pleased as she ought to have been; she could not think why till she remembered poor Lord Stoketon. She saw that he had very little chance of securing Sophy's affections, if Edward Temple was his rival. It was impossible that there could be a moment's hesitation in any one's mind between the two. There was not another person in England, she thought, who could have any chance against Mr. Temple.

Amongst the many visits to the Greys, which curiosity prompted on Charlotte Daventry's account, one common topic had been regularly discussed. A new family had arrived at Chatterton.

Lady Downton had, for once, hit on the truth, and Chatterton had become the residence of a

family of the name of Foley. It had long been untenanted. It was a large and good house, and it had gone to the hearts of all the individuals composing this good neighbourhood to see it year by year unoccupied, and all its powers wasted on the rats and mice, which, as it was averred, had there taken up their abode long before the period when mothers and fathers and daughters had given up hoping it would be inhabited by some more desirable occupants; long before the time when mothers had ceased to imagine the rich unmarried heir there domiciled to fall in love with one of their numerous daughters; long before fathers had given up the hope of there finding a congenial soul who should talk with them on the danger of the nation, be an active magistrate, and religiously preserve game for his neighbours' shooting; long before daughters had relinquished the hope of finding at Chatterton a

bosom friend, a girl with dark eyes, and long sentimental ringlets, and a brother not unlike his sister, poor, pale, and interesting ; or, as the more mercenary had anticipated, rich, gay, and captivating.

But still rats and mice alone resided at Chatterton under the superintendence of one old woman—a cross witch-like looking being, of whom it was asserted in the village that she was possessed of that superfluous luxury, a familiar spirit. Rats and mice prospered under her government : they encreased, and grew in number and boldness, and at last threatened to mutiny and turn out their sovereign, the witch-like old woman, who declared she could live there no longer ; and Chatterton was in danger of being deserted by all, save the rats and mice.

Mr. Foley saved it from this danger, by taking it from its owner, Mr. Aston, and com-

ing with his family there to reside. Rats and mice soon disappeared, cheerfulness and comforts appeared in their place, and Mr. and Mrs Foley, their son and daughter, gave the neighbourhood subject for conversation for a year to come.

Curiosity had been divided between them and Charlotte Daventry. Two such events had never before occurred in any country neighbourhood—a new family at a house long untenanted, and a grown up orphan who might be an heiress, introduced into a long-established family!

All who have lived in a quiet country neighbourhood will understand the delight of such a concurrence of events; but happy those, who like Anne Grey needed no such events to drive away the ennui of a quiet country life, and who, with her, have no ennui to drive away.

Anne needed no excitement—no wound-up curiosity to render her contented and cheerful. In her home employments—in her pursuits—her duties, she found full occupation, and she experienced the happiness which flows from well spent time, and a well-regulated and cultivated mind.

But there were many who were not sorry for the excitement of Chatterton and an orphan girl, and even Sophy and Mrs. Grey were not uninfected by it.

Sophy loved gossip and in spite of the reproofs of her father and the reflected light of her mother's lectures, she too frequently indulged in this fault. A lively disposition and the absence of very sound sense led her on to circulate the ill-natured reports which she repeated only because they were ludicrous, and her laugh might be heard as she made others laugh at a successful story. Perhaps her fault

is common to all young ladies above and below the age of twenty, who possess a little vanity, not much sense, and a very small turn for humour.

Sophy could not be perfectly happy till one fortunate morning the carriage stood at the door, Mrs. Grey, Anne and herself equipped—the horses impatient—the coachman patient—*all* ready, and off they set to pay their respects to Mr., Mrs., and Miss Foley, at Chatterton.

And now will they be at home? “I am sure not,” said Sophy. “When one wishes people to be so, they never are? What do you say, Anne?”

“Let me see the look of the servants as they open the door,” said Anne, “and I will tell you. I always know by the way they receive the interesting question.”

“Ah! you know I suppose perfectly by the time you hear the answer?” said Sophy.

“No, mine is really fair dealing,” said Anne laughing, “it is an instinctive power of reading thoughts before they are uttered.”

“Well, that is very curious,” said Mrs. Grey, who had not been listening very attentively, but heard the possession of some new accomplishment claimed by her daughter. “That is very curious and useful, I dare say. Who taught you, my dear?”

“Shyness, I believe, mama,” said Anne. “Shyness is an excellent instructor sometimes.”

The carriage was going over a rough part of the road, and it was not very easy to hear.

“Oh! Sir S—! Sir Samuel, I suppose—I don’t know him;” half muttered Mrs. Grey; but Anne did not hear, for the carriage was still making its way over the newly gravelled road.

“Some partner of hers,” thought Mrs.

Grey. "Here we are at the lodge," said she.
"I wonder whether they will be at home."

They were at home, and in another minute, Mrs. and the two Miss Greys were ushered into the drawing room at Chatterton.

CHAPTER XII.

WE have introduced the Greys into the Chatterton drawing-room. There they found three individuals—one a middle aged woman, who must, they thought, be Mrs. Foley—another a young and pleasing looking girl, whom they no less shrewdly guessed to be Miss Foley, and a third, a tall dark haired young man, whom they as wisely determined to be Mr. Foley, junior.

On their entrance the trio rose, the middle-

aged lady courtseyed in return to Mrs. Grey's courtesy, and then sat down again as if she knew nothing about them. The young lady said something civil to all the party, which Mrs. Grey, intent on the civility due to Mrs. Foley, did not hear, and was only forced into attention by the pointed offer of a seat, and the two Miss Greys and Mrs. Grey being seated, there was a silence.

The middle aged lady went on with her knitting, and seemed not to think she had any thing else to do. Mrs. Grey thought she must devote herself to her, and wondered how it would be best to begin the conversation. The young lady seemed bent on speaking to Mrs. Grey, Mrs. Grey appeared as obstinately bent on not considering her the person to whom she ought to attend. The tall young man sat in the farther corner of the room, lounging in an arm chair, apparently thinking he had no occasion to talk.

Anne was growing dreadfully shy, and felt as if her life depended on the awful silence being broken, but yet had not courage to utter the first word. What could she say? the day was neither fine nor the reverse, and nothing but the weather occurred to her mind. Sophy sat, not feeling shy, but with a strong inclination to laugh. Had the silence lasted a second more, nothing would have saved her, especially as she saw the young man in the arm chair opposite with his mouth curling, and his eyes twinkling with the same merry propensity!

At this instant the young lady gave up the hope of attracting Mrs. Grey's attention, and turned towards Sophy, with a blush on her face, which passed for a remark, though none was uttered. Thoughts of "Deaf and Dumb asylums," rushed on Sophy's mind. But the hint was taken. Sophy gave her attention, the

laugh that had just begun to sparkle in her eyes, and dimple her mouth, was checked, she determined to make a bold effort to speak, and said something in praise of the weather. The young lady assented, and the unlucky rain pattered heavily on the window, to declare at that moment in audible tones that neither Miss Grey nor Miss Foley had spoken the truth. However the spell was broken; even the rain gave a subject for conversation, and Mrs. Grey, hearing the sound of voices, ventured on a remark to the elderly lady, who contentedly continued her knitting.

“ Beautiful place,” said Mrs. Grey.

“ Yes, beautiful,” said the lady, looking rather surprised at being addressed.

“ I never saw it look so well,” said Mrs. Grey very civilly.

“ Indeed,” responded the lady.

“ I hope you like it?” continued Mrs. Grey.

The lady looked up—stared—and answered, “Certainly.”

“What!” thought Mrs. Grey, “she thinks I ought to know that Mr. Foley would not have taken it without her approval!”

“I hope you like the neighbourhood?” said Mrs. Grey again.

The middle aged lady was puzzled—that was a home question, and as Mrs. Grey got only a sort of ‘hem’ for an answer, she tried still nearer home, and said:—

“I hope Mr. Foley is well?”

“Mr. and Mrs. Foley are gone this morning to Hadley,” was the reply.

“I beg your pardon,” said poor Mrs. Grey, who actually blushed at her mistake: the secret was out, and this was not Mrs. Foley, probably a visitor, and though Mrs. Grey knew why she ought to beg pardon, she forgot that the middle-aged woman might not; but Mrs. Grey deter-

mined to retrieve her error, and turned to the young lady, whom she was shocked to think she had so long neglected, and resolving to be on the safe side, said :—

“ Miss Foley, I presume ?”

Miss Foley bowed and half smiled, and Mrs. Grey now feeling on safe ground, said, laughing a little, “ It is really so awkward to introduce oneself; I hope you will excuse my blunders. I believed Mrs. Foley was in the room,” and then followed several civil speeches, and Mrs. Grey, looking complimentary towards the young man in the arm chair, said :—

“ Your brother, I presume, Miss Foley ?” and the reply that it was her cousin called for another apology from Mrs. Grey.—

Soon after, the parting words were uttered and an introduction having taken place between the middle aged woman and the Greys, by which they ascertained her name was Smith,

Mrs. and the two Miss Greys walked out of the room—got into the carriage, and there might have been heard the long suppressed laughter of Sophy Grey, and the accordant merriment of Anne, and then in the drawing-room at Chatterton might have been heard the same merry sounds from Miss Foley and her cousin, as the carriage drove off.

“Foley or anti Foley?” interrogated William Grey, as his mother and sisters entered the room on their return from Chatterton; and Sophy gave a laughing relation of the scene.

“Excellent!” said William, “by Jove! what would I not have given to have been there! and so ma’am,” turning to his mother who was unshawling, and had not been attending “you told Mrs. *whats her name*, the humble friend, that you hoped she found Mrs. Foley’s house comfortable, and I suppose she assured you it was?”

“No, indeed,” said Mrs. Grey, “she did not say so. I thought she seemed not to think it so very:”—

“Oh! toady,” said William, laughing. “So you tell tales out of school do you? and what is Miss Foley, Sophy? Has she any beauty? Has she any ideas in her head, do you think beyond a fine or rainy day?”

“Oh yes! and she is very pretty; I should like to see you in love William just for once!” a cloud came across William’s brow, which she did not perceive; “and Miss Foley will do admirably for you—it would be such a novelty, and so amusing!”

“What nonsense girls talk and think!” said William, in a voice which shewed he was not in the best of tempers, and did not take Sophy’s plan as it was meant. “They never can talk five minutes but they must bring in love. I wish, Sophy, you would learn at least

not to let all the world see upon what your thoughts are running !”

William walked to the other end of the room, with an indignant air.

“ What a bad humour William is in !” said Sophy, in not a low voice to Anne—Anne did not answer. Sophy felt convinced that eldest brothers required a great deal of patience and forbearance, and, walking out of the room, she hummed the air of an Italian song, which Captain Herbert had given her. *He* was a younger brother !

Anne also left the drawing-room, and proceeded to Charlotte Daventry’s room. As she opened the door, she saw her cousin busily engaged in looking over papers, and she hesitated to enter.

“ Oh ! come in, Anne,” said she, “ you will not interrupt me. Indeed, now we are alone, I wished to shew you something. I feel sure

you will understand my feelings. I am often very wretched," continued she leaning her head upon her hands as she sat on the sofa, on which Anne had also seated herself; "but I do not wish to shew it. I cannot speak of it when I see all around me gay, and happy, and thoughtless. They are all very kind to me, but with you I feel that I am understood. I fancy that you can enter into my feelings," and the tears which fell from between her fingers shewed what those feelings must be.

"Yes, indeed, dear Charlotte," said Anne, affectionately taking her hand, "I do feel for you!" and the tears stood in her eyes as she spoke. "I have often felt for you! But I hoped as you seemed more cheerful of late, that you had begun to feel your affliction less bitterly. I am sorry indeed if it is not so!"

"Aye, I thought I should deceive by my manner. I wished to deceive *them* into thinking

me happy, and forgetful, and hard-hearted, and I knew that I could. All are not so quick—all have not feelings—somehow—you understand, perhaps—” She hesitated as though she scarcely liked to explain. “You know some people have not by nature the same feelings as others—but I do not know what I am saying—they are all so kind—too kind to me!” she heaved a deep sigh, and Anne saw that she must be thinking of her father’s character, as a reason why she should not deserve kindness, and she loved her for this delicacy of feeling.

“I often think that you understand me,” said Charlotte. “I sometimes see that others do not understand your feelings, and I have wished very much that I might speak to you, and tell you that I, at least, though I am so foolish and ignorant, could comprehend you, and that I might tell you of my own; and yet it is not kind to talk to you so: it must distress you.”

“No,” said Anne very kindly; “though it distresses me to see you suffer, yet it distresses me less to be told of it by you, than to think you were keeping your grief to yourself; it must encrease, if brooded over without the consolation of imparting your feelings to others. It is a very amiable feeling which has actuated your concealment, dear Charlotte; and I cannot but love you the more for such a proof of self-controul.”

“As Anne uttered the last word Charlotte half withdrew, with a convulsive shudder, the hand which Anne affectionately held in hers. “I see,” continued Anne, “what fortitude you have exercised from the emotion it causes you even to allude to your praiseworthy efforts; but, dear Charlotte, do not over-exert yourself. Be sure that I shall understand you, and be always ready to listen to the utterance of your grief. You are mistaken if you think that any of us do not feel for you;

but all, perhaps, do not shew it so much, and all may not be equally quick in perceiving, through a gay and smiling face, the sorrow which lies beneath. They would pity if they knew that pity was required. I can feel," said Anne, whilst the tear trembled in her eye, "how impossible it would be soon to forget those whom we have loved. As yet I have not been tried; but when I look around me, on all on whom I depend for affection, I feel what it would be to lose even one out of the number. I feel what it must be to love but one, and to lose that one. I can truly feel for you!" her voice faltered as she uttered the last words, and the tears fell fast, whilst the sobs of the orphan girl were heard, as the soft affectionate voice of Anne had ceased, and the two cousins wept together; the one with the heart-breaking sense of desolation of the brotherless and sisterless orphan; the other with the less selfish feeling of overpowering sympathy in her sorrow.

Anne was the first to utter. She spoke in soothing tones ; and Charlotte became composed as she spoke, though for awhile she made no answer to the kind words which fell from the lips of Anne. At length she expressed her sense of relief, at the assurance of Anne's sympathy, and also the knowledge that she would understand her feelings. She then said that she had called Anne into the room for the purpose of shewing her a miniature of her father.

“ I felt that I could shew it to you,” said she. “ Do not open it here. I am weak and foolish, and I do not wish to make you cry for me again ;” she tried to smile. “ But take it to your own room. It is like—very like!—You will not show it to any one, but look at it yourself, and try,” her voice faltered, “ to think with kindness of,” she hesitated, “ of *him* ;” she added in a low voice, and Anne saw her emo-

tion, and left the room with the miniature in her hand.

She was much overcome with this little scene. She had scarcely expected such from her cousin. It was true she had occasionally remarked tokens of strong feeling, which displayed themselves involuntarily, and were instantly checked; but Charlotte had generally seemed gay and cheerful. She felt that she must rather have under-rated her character. There was, at times, something so childish in her manner, that Anne had believed her incapable of strong feeling. She was still an enigma to her, for though her feelings had, perhaps, not been very well expressed in this interview, still they shewed, both in their existence and in their concealment, such ardour, and strength of mind, and character, that the mode of expression could not diminish her astonishment and admiration at their knowledge.

When Anne opened the case which contained the miniature she was surprized, and not, perhaps, agreeably, in seeing the strong resemblance which it bore to her cousin. There were the dark peculiar eyes, and the expression in the mouth which at times was so remarkable Charlotte.

Anne sighed, and wished she had been less like her father in appearance, “and yet, what,” thought she, “signify externals, unlike as she is in all that is of real importance? Poor girl! how can I love and pity her enough?” and she closed the case which held the miniature.

CHAPTER XIII.

A FEW days after the Greys' first visit to Chatterton, Mr., Mrs. and Miss Foley were ushered into the drawing-room at Weston.

Now, though I have a plot in my head, it is a peaceable plot, and Mrs. Grey, if she had heard it would hardly have started, or thought of Gunpowder Treason. Still there is a plot, and it is either for or against the peace of William Grey, and Miss Foley. *For or against*, I leave to the decision of any one who has ever been in love.

William Grey, as may have been perceived, had admired Jane Graham, but Lady Downton assured him that she was going to be married to another. William Grey was not a man to be inconsolable. Miss Foley was pretty, and what is called, "an uncommonly nice girl," and William Grey can do no less than fall in love with her. He must, then, become a hero, and he must open the door soon after their arrival at Weston, and as he enters, and makes one, two, or three, large heavy strides towards Mr. and Mrs. Foley, for the purpose of saying, "how do you do," Miss Foley must discover him to be strikingly handsome, very gentlemanlike, and the very beau-ideal of what a lover should be!

If I do not describe Mr. and Mrs. Foley, no one will know anything about them, and if I do, am I sure that they will know a great deal more? We must imagine them seated, and that

Mrs. Grey had uttered something very civil, for she remembered that, as new neighbours, they were the lions and lionesses of the day.

Mr. Foley was looking and hoping for something better than Mrs. Grey, (poor woman!) upon whom to expend his agreeableness, and Mrs. Foley sinking in languid inertness upon the sofa, uttered common-places in a feeble, heart-rending voice.

Mr. Foley! If I prized him as highly as he prized himself, I should desire the publisher to put those two words in letters of gold. They are precious ones—not in themselves—no! there may be a hundred Mr. Foleys to come, and there may have been a hundred Mr. Foleys come and gone, who had the self-same words attached to them, and yet were nothing; but it is he himself, who gave a value to those two words. Those two small words are the embodiment, and stand for the intimation of this

man's being—of this very Mr. Foley, who, if his name had unluckily chanced to be Jones, or Smith, or Higginbottom, would have given a lustre to the name, and still have made us desire that it should stand alone in the book, Jones, Smith, or Higginbottom, each letter a golden one.

Mr. Foley thought himself more accomplished, more talented—(that is not an orthodox word, but it is useful)—more capable of succeeding in all he attempted than any other man in England, and if he did not quite succeed in persuading every one else to think so, he cared but little for the ignorant and envious few who denied his superior powers.

Mr. Foley was proud of himself—proud of his wife, because she was *his* wife ; proud of his son for the same reason ; proud of his daughter for ditto ; proud of his house now it was his (he had been proud of his other house, though he

had left it because the wind blew in so cold—the prospect from the windows was so bleak and dull, and the aspect so due north). He was proud of Chatterton—proud of the neighbourhood—proud of everything to which, in speaking of it, he could append that small, sweetly toned monosyllable ‘my.’

Mr. Foley, when I die, will you grant me one favour? Will you let my epitaph be written by your hand? Let yours be the pen to depict my character, for remember I am *your* novelist; then I know my epitaph will be my eulogy.

Mrs. Foley was a tall, sickly, not in-elegant looking woman—gifted with delicate health, and with so much sensibility as to render her health a little worse than it really was. She was a very good, amiable woman, with small abilities, small feet and hands, a small delicate looking face, and a small voice;—an excellent

wife and mother, and daughter, and sister and cousin. She had a large heart, and it took in all her relations to the hundredth cousin, and farther still, if any one farther had liked to claim it. She loved them all in regular degrees : she had kind feelings and pity for the fifty times removed cousins ; sighs and ‘ poor things,’ to give on the death of the twenty times removed ; sighs, ‘ poor things,’ and a few tears on that of the ten times distant ; a diminution of sleep for the five times ; and a positive flow of tears and loss of sleep and appetite on the demise of the second cousins once removed. For first cousins, aunts, and uncles, she had a whole world of heart and affection, and for her husband and children there was more than a whole devoted heart—there were sighs and fears, and alarms each day, and tears for every look bestowed on them !

She had lost one daughter, and ever since

that melancholy event, Mrs. Foley had thought that she might lose another—that she might lose her husband or her son ; she never looked at them but she thought of this,—the tears always filled her eyes as she did so ; and Mr. Foley thought “ she is my wife. This is charming sensibility.”

But William Grey is waiting all this time to come on the stage—so here is his cue—“ charming sensibility,” and William entered. Mrs. Grey introduced him as her son, and he sat down by Miss Foley. Perhaps few would believe that William Grey could be very agreeable, yet so it was. There was a degree of blunt humour, originality, shrewdness and cleverness, joined to an open-hearted frankness that made him very agreeable when he chose to be so ; and Miss Foley felt no doubt of his powers as she drove back to Chatterton that morning.

William thought her a very pretty specimen

of a young lady, and with less nonsense about her than most girls—but alas for Miss Foley—his heart was still with Jane Graham.

I have often moralized (for writers of novels do moralize sometimes) on the perverse distribution of human events and human gifts. I have often thought what a pity it is that to the poor half-starved beggar cannot be given a little of the superfluous wealth that comes showering in upon the rich. I have often looked on the world at large with the eye of a moralizer, and seen the good and bad things of life scattered about as though at random; I have seen the rich as it were attracting riches which they did not want; the poor as it were attracting the poverty which threatened to overwhelm them. I have seen the dowerless girl, deprived also of beauty, talents, and education; the splendid heirless loaded with the superfluous gifts of beauty, accomplishments, and sense: I have seen the

broken-down and afflicted, with afflictions still showered upon them — the gay, the proud, and the unfeeling, with fresh pleasures and enjoyments bestowed each day. I have seen the child who, in days of fête, has received one gay and glittering toy, overwhelmed with gay and glittering toys all coming on her the rich and fortunate; and I have seen the poor forlorn child whose grandfather or grandmother have forgotten to make the birthday or the Christmas present, alike deserted by all—no glittering toy is hers! Had one out of the many, heaped on the fortunate child, been spared to her, how happy would it have made her—how much better had it been! But it is ever thus—tears to the needless stream—riches to the rich—poverty to the poor—the heart of William Grey to the girl who had already won a heart, and no heart of William Grey to poor Miss Foley, who had no heart to call her own.

CHAPTER XIV.

CHARLOTTE Daventry seemed happy and cheerful,—she went out with her cousins, and was charmed with Lady Dowton, who was charmed with her. She struck up a friendship with Miss Foley and with one of the Miss Dashwoods, and seemed none the sadder for the very strong feelings she sometimes displayed to Anne Grey. It is very true, that except in romantic novels, there is no such thing as keeping up a sentiment for life. People, let them be as miserable,

and romantically disconsolate as they may, will have their moments of tolerable happiness. They are not always screwed up to a sigh-and-groan pitch, but descend every now and then to eat, laugh, and be merry ; and so it seemed with Charlotte Daventry—but we will not judge her severely.

Mrs. Grey was beginning to despair of any invitations coming to Weston, and of ever being able to marry either of her daughters, or poor Charlotte Daventry, to whom, in the goodness of her heart, she extended her benevolent wish that she should be married and got out of the house.

After all, when a good affectionate mother talks of the pleasure of seeing her daughters married, what is it but talking of the pleasure of losing their society?—of losing the companion, the friend perhaps (for mothers do make friends of their daughters), the joy, the gladness of the

house? But mothers are so unselfish! and Mrs. Grey, good woman! never wished so heartily for any thing in her life (except sometimes that Mr. Grey would be in time for his dinner), as she did for her daughters to marry, and her niece too, now she had one living with her.

“My dear,” said she to Mr. Grey, when Mr. Grey felt a perverse inclination not to let his wife and daughters go to a ball; “My dear, you know what an object it is that the girls should be seen and known. How are they ever to marry if they are not? It is of the greatest consequence. I always feel that from experience. You know, Mr. Grey, how I was shut up.”

“Yes, my dear,” said Mr. Grey, with a smile, “and you see how it has turned out.”

“Now you are very tiresome, Mr. Grey,” said she, though she could not feel very cross just then.

Still she was unhappy in the absence of invitations, and nothing consoled her but the frequent sight of Mrs. Dodson and her son.

Some little time ago, I called Robert Dodson like his mother, but Robert Dodson was now very much improved. He did not shuffle his feet when in company—did not blush very much, his exterior was tolerably gentleman-like, and his mind had been improved by a little collision with the world—that many in one, that one in many, which is said to do so much harm, and so much good—to be so dangerous, so useful, so deceitful, and so desirable!

The world had certainly done Robert Dodson good. It had diminished the vulgarity of both his mind and appearance, and he had turned out not at all what the novelist would expect from a man whose father had made his money by trade. He had sense and taste

enough to prefer his cousins the Greys to Mrs. Dodson's vulgar and illiterate relations and friends. Mrs. Grey was very fond of him, and called him "a very superior young man." We will not pretend to say what her ideas of superiority were, or to whom he was supposed to be superior ! Mr. Grey liked him, because he thought him good-hearted, and not very deficient in sense.

Sophy and Anne both liked him—He was so good-humoured, and after all, not so very stupid ; so they were never sorry when Cousin Robert called, in the morning, and looked at their drawings (sometimes the wrong way upwards, to be sure), for he always thought them beautiful, and he listened to their music, and really liked Anne's singing, when it was not Italian.

And Charlotte Daventry, did not she like him ? Oh certainly ! and in the innocence of

her heart, good simple girl, she thought he must be very charming, because he was cousin to the Greys—She liked him very much, and thought he ought to marry one of her cousins. These opinions were expressed to Mrs. Grey alone. Good girl ! She always found out what people wished to hear, and it was the more amiable in this case, as she did laugh at Cousin Bob a little before her cousins, and was quite aware of his deficiencies. As Mrs. Grey reflected on what Charlotte had said, and indulged in the hope that Anne might meet with another Lord Stoketon, she sometimes said to herself, “If both Sophy and Anne marry noblemen, there is no reason why Charlotte should not marry Robert Dodson.”

A rumour of Lord Stoketon’s attentions to Sophy had reached Mrs. Dodson, but like a sensible woman, she never attended to rumours which she wished not to be true, and Sophy

continued in her mind as the future Mrs. Dodson. But in spite of hints, inuendos, and broader jokes, Sophy was not such in the mind of her son Robert. Robert Dodson, though less hard and unsusceptible than most men, whose mothers wish them to marry, was yet perverse enough to make his own choice, and instead of fixing on the sister Mrs. Dodson intended, he chose for himself, and fell in love with Anne.

Robert Dodson had not much quickness, but he saw that Anne was always kind and considerate. He was not afraid of her laughing at him, and time was when Sophy had done so. Sophy would be very good-natured when there was no one present but her Cousin Robert; but on other occasions, vanity, or her love of ridicule, interfered with her good-nature.

Anne never changed; and even Robert Dodson discovered that she was superior in

intellect to her sister, and he began to forget that Sophy was pretty, though he had always heard she was so; but he began to feel that Anne was lovely, and that there was nothing which gave him such a decided impression of happiness as sitting in the small morning room at Weston, with his eyes fixed on Anne Grey, and his ears taking in the sound of her sweet voice as she sung. Still Anne knew nothing of it.

Charlotte Daventry was likewise a favourite of Robert Dodson's, for she was very kind to him, and if Sophy and Anne were out of the room (and no one could tell how it was, but he and Charlotte had several *tête à têtes* together), she always talked to him of Anne, and there was that in her manner of doing so which sent him home a very happy man, with a self-satisfied feeling, and a kind of vague idea that Anne Grey was not so far from returning his love as he had supposed.

How truly amiable, and good-natured, and complying, Charlotte Daventry must have been, for there was not an individual in that family, and scarce an individual out of it, who did not feel a liking towards her, and experience a secret and flattering conviction that they had been singled out to be the object of her peculiar confidence, affection, admiration, or respect!

And yet, why was there so often a dissatisfied, or an excited feeling, when the private conversation was over? Why did human nature appear so faulty, or human life at times so enchanting? Why did suspicion flash across the mind—why did vanity rise and flutter into pride—why did it turn with contempt, and peevish dissatisfaction to the homage which before had satisfied its aspirations? Why did even the most gentle, the most loving, and affectionate of beings, turn away at times from

those conversations, with a sense that there might be some in the world who could understand and appreciate her better than the father and mother, and brother and sister, she had hitherto regarded with unmixed affection? and why did she, still more often and more sadly, feel that she herself was perhaps unworthy of their undivided love?

The hint was given:—it was by accident, certainly, for it came from Charlotte Daventry—yet a hint was given, that *none* in that family circle, to whom all the ardour, and steadiness of her own affection was given, loved her as she *ought* to be loved! Anne felt it might be so—it might be that she was not loved as the others were—she did not use the word as she *ought* to be loved: No, she was loved as much as she deserved:—more—much more perhaps; but still, not perhaps, as she had once imagined.

“How little idea has Charlotte,” thought she, one day, “that those trifling things which she imagines mean nothing should have such an effect upon me ! She is a dear good girl, but somehow,” sighed Anne, “I could almost wish she had never come amongst us ! I do not know why, but we have not gone on the same together since ; and yet it is not her fault, and how selfish, and wicked I am ! It is that we grow older, and troubles must and will increase. Yet I could wish that Sophy did not confide so much to Charlotte, and so much less to me. Selfish, or jealous, or something very bad, I must be,” thought she, and sighed and then smiled, for she thought how foolish she was, and that it was more worth a smile than a sigh.

She went down to the drawing-room, and there she found Charlotte, and Robert Dodson busily engaged in talking. They stopped as she entered. Charlotte looked as

if she knew not why, and Robert Dodson looked very foolish, and conscious, as though well aware that they had been talking on a subject that could not be continued before Anne.

It was true that Sophy had begun to make a confidante of her cousin; and when Lord Stoketon and Captain Herbert had been duly canvassed between them, Sophy sometimes felt that perhaps Anne's ideas were singular on those subjects, and that Charlotte was a very comfortable and sensible person to talk to. She always had considered her rather foolish: but then she was such a dear good-hearted girl! and had such a nice little way of flattering!

"It is odd how every one likes Charlotte!" thought Sophy, and then came the thought, "I wonder whether I ever shall see Lord Stoketon again! It would be very nice to be Lady Stoketon, and have plenty of jewels and dresses. I would be the best dressed woman

in Town. The equipages I would leave to him. He has pretty good taste." Was this the right way for a good sort of girl to think of the man she was going to marry? Perhaps it was not natural, but still it was the way in which Sophy Grey thought of being Lady Stoketon, when she had been talking to Charlotte Davenport.

At length invitations began to flow in, and like all the rest of the world's good things, they came all at once; and now the only question from Mrs. Grey was, "my dear, shall we go to the Gilberts', or the Dashwoods', or accept the Mortons', and so come back for the Foleys'; or shall we say we will go to the Cunninghams'?"

"Which ever you please, my dear," sighed Mr. Grey, as he saw with agony the notes and envelopes, short, concise, and numerous, lying on the table, and heard Mrs. Grey enumerate Gilberts, Mortons, Dashwoods, &c. &c., all wil-

ling to inflict upon him “the pleasure of seeing them.”

“Whichever you please,” sighed he. “If it were not for my daughters and Charlotte I never would stir from home again,” thought he; and yet Mr. Grey you were not quite right there, for you know very well that once safely removed from your arm chair, no one enjoys society more than you do!

“You may accept whichever you like, my dear,” said Mr. Grey, “only you know you cannot accept all.” “(Thank goodness!” thought he, but the thought was not uttered.)

“Perhaps,” he added, “it would save the risk of offending, if we accepted none?”

“Accepted none!” ejaculated Mrs. Grey, shocked and alarmed: “my dear Mr. Grey! what, not go to either the Dashwoods’, or Mortons’, or Foleys’, or Cunninghams’, or—”

“Heaven defend us!” said unhappy Mr.

Grey holding up his hands, "go to all, my dear ! only do not let me hear any more about it. Let me advise that we try to go to all if we can, and then one should hope that, for a year at least, we shall be at peace."

"Very well, Mr. Grey, then I will try how many we can possibly accept;" and away went Mrs. Grey, quite pleased to find her husband so accommodating and unusually willing to go from home.

The only thing that made Anne Grey not quite dislike the idea of leaving home was the hope of meeting Mr. Temple. Anne had not forgotten him, nor had she forgotten that he had been heard to admire Sophy. Sophy remembered this also, and she hoped to meet him, for she was sure on reflection that he did admire her, and she wished that if he had not done so very decidedly before, he should be made to do so now.

And Charlotte Daventry, what did she feel? She was also going from home though not to all the visits; and in her room that night, had we watched and seen her face, there might have been observed that dark, deep expression dwelling in her eyes — that peculiar smile curling on her lips.

“ My labours are beginning,” murmured she, “ much already! but now the toil increases, — the field is open! Yes it shall! Father, Father!” almost screaming forth that name, “ Father! could you see me?” The smile brightened, and the eyes flashed. “ Father! you *do* see me! I know it—I feel it! It must be, or never—never! when her arm was round me—her sweet, innocent face—*her kindness!* Oh, father!”

Charlotte Daventry threw herself on the bed, and sobs and groans burst forth. It was

anguish spoke in those groans, and they were repeated—continued—still and still again.

But, let us watch no more ! let us turn to a happier scene ;—let us turn to the chamber of the pure and innocent—let us see Anne Grey !—meek, quiet, happy—risen from her knees, the tear of gratitude and love still on her cheek. “ Bless them, Oh my God ! Bless them, O God, and may they be blessed ! ” was her mental prayer for those she loved ; and the kiss of sisterly love, that warm affectionate kiss, had been given, as the sisters threw their arms around each other’s necks ; and then the soft ‘ good night,’ and the ‘ good night’ repeated, and then the room was still—and surely God was there.

CHAPTER XV.

IF I was writing a romantic novel, I should say “dark and gloomy was the day which witnessed &c—” but, as it is, I say “bright and unclouded was the morning,” which saw the departure of Mr. Grey’s family-coach from the door at Weston.

“My dear Sir,” said William, who found himself compelled to make the fifth in the family coach, “never lay commands on me again.”

Mr. Grey smiled—"Your mother has commanded both of us. We are fellow sufferers William," said he with an expressive shrug of his shoulders.

"How I like going from home!" said Sophy, in a joyous tone. "The sun always shines and looks twice as bright as usual."

"I suppose," said William drily, "the brightest sun is for a ball, a degree less brilliant for a visit of a week, a slight encrease for a two-night affair, and only the light of a farthing rushlight for a dinner visit—that is, if you could see it! Is it so?" said he, as if he thought he had been putting down a very silly, missish remark.

"Exactly," said Sophy, "you have got the exact gradations; but you have not said anything of going to town. The sun for that would be :"—

“ ‘Dark with excess of light’ I presume,” said William. “That must be the reason why the sun is never visible in London. Put that down in your journal or note book, one or both of which I hope you have.”

“No,” said Sophy, “I have not, shame to say. My journal is the journal of my heart!” laying her hand ^{on} her heart, looking at William, and making him laugh at last.

The reader should know that we are on our road to Hilton, the seat of James John Cunningham, Esq. M.P. for the county of ———, consequently a regular attendant with wife and family on county balls; a bustling, pompous man, who faithfully represented in himself, for the benefit of his constituents, all the activity and pomposity of the county.

James John Cunningham, Esq., had a wife, three daughters grown up, four sons, all hap-

pily at school, a maiden sister, a good fortune, and a tolerably good house, which was always compelled to hold more people than it conveniently could.

The three Miss Cunninghams were the three Miss Cunninghams, and nothing more : one sung, and did not play ; one played, and did not sing : one drew and did not play or sing. One had dark hair and light eyes ; one had dark eyes and light hair ; one had both light hair and light eyes ; and these were the characteristics of the Miss Cunninghams. Nobody could mistake them one for the other, they thought, they were “so different!” They had always taken care to be “so different!” to learn “all the different things!”

The Greys were invited to Hilton, as usual, to attend a county ball. It is not the etiquette for mamas to take out more than two daughters at once ; and as Charlotte Daventry was

in the light of a daughter, it was impossible all three should go to Hilton. Anne declared, over and over again, that she should prefer staying at home, and that it would amuse Charlotte, and do her good to go.—Charlotte as firmly declared the same thing, with regard to herself and Anne.

The point was decided at last by the opportune offer of Lady Dowton to receive Charlotte at Westhorpe, during the Greys' absence. Sir John, whom I have already mentioned, as that nonentity—a thorough-going hunting and sporting man, rode over on purpose to press her acceptance of the invitation; and the same day that saw the Greys' departure for Hilton saw that of Charlotte Daventry, with her little brisk-looking French maid, to Sir John Dowton's.

We will leave Charlotte to be talked to death by Lady Dowton, if it should so occur,

and go with the Greys to Hilton, where we find a large party assembled. Amongst those in the drawing-room, dressed for dinner, one immediately started forward on the Miss Greys' entrance, his hand extended, a smile on his face, and a hearty 'how do you do' on his lips; and Sir Henry Poynton received in return the pretty smiles of Anne Grey. He was soon seated by her, and looked with admiration enough for a younger man on her placid face, as she sat listening to the expression of his good fortune in having met them, and to the beginning of "quite a new story," which Anne had heard only three times before.

There was a large and miscellaneous party at Hilton, large enough to excuse me from the task of describing them.

At dinner, Anne found herself placed with Sir Henry Poynton (of course) on one side, and a quiet sensible-looking young man on the

other, whose first observation was, "that they had become very near neighbours."

"Does he mean at dinner? No, certainly!" thought Anne, "who can he be?" But as her companion seemed to think that she must know as much about him as he did about her, she did not like to shew her ignorance, but trusted to a fortunate mention of his name to enlighten her, and a question addressed to him, headed 'Foley,' soon gave the desired information. However, Anne made but little use of this intelligence, for Sir Henry Poynton engaged her attention.

"That was a melancholy day, Miss Anne," said he, "that you were all called away from Hadley. I can assure you we all missed you uncommonly, and we praised you and talked about you all the evening, except Stoketon, who, by the bye, never said a word! Do you know I rather suspect something there! But

never mind! I will not ask questions. Poor Stoketon—he was very bad!—But we were all very dull that evening, and we talked about you. Even Temple seemed dull, and you know what an amusing fellow he is. Dalton was worse than usual, and Lady Hadley was low. By the bye, Miss Anne, you ought to be very proud of a certain person's good opinion. I have just mentioned his name. Ah! you must not blush to hear yourself praised, though to tell you the truth, when I was a young man I used not to dislike to see a woman blush. It is very pretty and becoming, and besides that, it always augurs something favourable. When a girl was known to blush because Harry Poynton was named (I was called Harry Poynton then), I always knew what inference to draw."

Poor Anne's blushes increased, as good-natured Sir Henry so kindly pointed out to her the inferences he would draw from them; and

though she felt some curiosity to know who the person was who had praised her, she almost hoped Sir Henry would forget to name him.

“ But, as I was saying, Miss Anne, you ought to be proud of a certain person’s praise. He is very fastidious, I assure you, and he did say such things when that Lady Mary Dalton (to tell you a secret, I do not like that girl,)” in a confidential tone—“ when that Lady Mary chose to say something not quite—you know—not quite—”

Sir Henry had got into a scrape—but *n’importe!* he blundered on—“ He defended you, you know—He did take your part so well. I could have cried—“bravo, Temple!” and he completely silenced her silly simpering ladyship!—she never said a word again that evening; and yet Temple was quite quiet—you understand—perfectly gentlemanlike—and yet we all saw what he meant.”

Did not Anne's heart flutter with delight? Did she not think Sir Henry Poynton the dearest old man that ever lived?—As to the fact that Lady Mary Dalton had abused her—that was nothing; and when she retired to her room that night, she said to Sophy,—“What a very pleasant evening it has been!”

“Why, then, you must have been indebted to the absence of any one to talk to, or to old Sir Harry Poynton's agreeable prosing, for I never saw you speak to any one but him, unless you call talking to those nonentities, the Cunningham girls, conversation.”

“Certainly,” said Anne, “they are not very amusing;” and she did now begin to wonder what it was that made her think it such a very pleasant evening.

“To be sure,” thought she, and she began to see that it had not been so pleasant, “I am Sophy's sister. It was natural he should defend me!”

Sophy was not quite so well pleased as Anne had been. She had expected to have seen either Lord Stoketon or Captain Herbert, and she had found neither. It was true she had made acquaintance with George Foley, and he had seemed very well inclined to rejoice that they were become neighbours. She had perceived, as she and Anne had entered the room, and had been addressed as Miss Greys', that he gave a little surprised, agreeable start, as much as to say,—“ I am glad to see what nice people our new neighbours are ;” and Sophy determined to make him think so still more before the evening was over.

George Foley was very quiet, had nothing like brilliancy, and perhaps appeared to least advantage in mixed society, and on a first acquaintance ; but he was an excellent person, with an amiable disposition, steady principles, and sound useful sense. He was well informed,

and might even be called clever—if cleverness here do not mean genius. Had he been a little more quick, or presuming, he would have been more considered ; but as it was, he was merely a quiet, gentlemanlike person, of whom every one thought highly, and whom prudent Mamas called an ‘excellent young man,’ because he would have a large fortune. Sophy had found out during the evening, that his sister had given a favourable account of them, that he had a due appreciation of humour, and if he could not say brilliant things himself, he could understand those that were said by others.

Nothing but the ball was talked and thought of the following day. There was a young lady in the house who had never been to one before—so she wondered whether she should like it, and assured all who listened to her that she should be ‘so shy’—and over and over again she was assured she would not—that nothing was

so little alarming as a ball. A great deal of pretty and interesting fear was displayed, and a great deal of good-nature expended in persuading her that there would be nothing very terrible in that which no one wished her to do against her will, and which she had dreamt of with delight for the last week.

The evening of the ball arrived, and as Sophy and Anne entered the drawing-room, ready attired, George Foley's animated expression as he spoke to Anne, and engaged her for the first dance, betrayed at once that, however lovely he might consider her sister, he thought her still more fascinating.

And now the party were all assembled—cloaks, coats, hats, and furred shoes sought for, found, and put on—the carriages filled—and off they drove. On entering the ball-room at—George Foley was ready to place himself near Anne, and to watch that she did not forget her engagement.

A quadrille was in the act of finishing ; and when the music re-commenced, Sophy and Anne, with their respective partners, placed themselves in the middle of the room for the infinite pleasure of standing so many minutes side by side, and face to face ; of sliding to one side, and then to the other, taking hold of one hand, and then of the other, and then, inestimable advantage ! of giving the tip of a finger to a *vis à vis*, and avoiding the sleeve of a *vis à vis*' partner ; and for all this did the three Miss Cunninghams envy Sophy and Anne Grey, as they were left partnerless to form a part of the long formal row that lined the walls of the ball-room. Sophy's eyes were sparkling, her step was light and buoyant, her laugh gay and happy ; Anne's countenance was also lit up with animation, her smile just bright enough, her complexion just tinged with sufficient colour, and her figure moved lightly and gracefully

along. George Foley watched her through the quadrille, and thought he never had seen so lovely a being.

“Your sister is not here, I think?” said Anne to him.

“No, she was engaged elsewhere. She is at the Downtons’.”

“Indeed!” replied Anne. “I am glad of that, for my cousin, Charlotte Daventry, is there.”

George Foley looked pleased by Anne’s manner. He was gratified on his sister’s account, and perhaps a little on his own, for who has not felt, at times, that interest in our relatives may not be far distant from interest in ourselves? The quadrille was soon at an end, and Sophy and Anne both returned to their seats. Sophy was asked for the next dance, quadrille, waltz, or galoppe, and Anne was also engaged. The music began, and—“waltz or quadrille? Oh! a waltz!”

“ I am so glad ! ” said Sophy, with one of her brightest smiles, and just then she saw the back of a head amongst the heads of a party who had just entered, and were making their way through the crowd to the other side of the room.

Whether there was anything very peculiar in the sight—any very remarkable characteristic in the wave of the hair, I do not know ; but Sophy gave a little start, and whispered to Anne, who was scarcely near enough to hear, “ It certainly is ! Do you see ? It must be ! ” in a tone of joyful surprise ; but Anne did not hear—she was attending to the civil nothings of a stupid partner.

In a few minutes more the owner of the head turned round—his eyes wandered about the room in search of something—and it was soon very evident what that something must have been ! His eye fell on Sophy, and in

another instant, the joyful start, and the heightened colour, shewed that he saw and recognised her; and Lord Stoketon, for it was no other, was making his way towards her, passing to the right and left, gliding, and sliding, till, with beaming face, and extended hand, he was close to her, and “Miss Grey!” burst from his lips.

Sophy looked quite as happy and conscious as Lord Stoketon wished, and he, whilst he looked at her, forgot that he was still holding her hand, though the hearty, impressive shake ought to have been long at an end. Sophy’s partner stared, and wondered who he was, and thought—I don’t know what! but whatever it might be, Lord Stoketon did not care. He cared for nothing but seeing Sophy Grey again, and ensuring her as his partner for the next dance—for two or three dances—perhaps for life!

CHAPTER XVI.

THE next dance was a happy one. Lord Stoke-ton said a great deal that could have but one meaning.

“I thought I never should see you again, Miss Grey,” said he. “I almost gave it up; and yet, do you know, I shall never disbelieve in presentiments again! When Jack Nugent said to me, “there is a ball at ——, do you mean to go?” I felt, in a moment, that nothing would keep me away. I felt that I should meet you

there! and I came for no other purpose. I hope you believe me, Miss Grey?" Miss Grey found it easier to believe in silence than to speak. "If you had seen me that miserable evening that you all went, I think you would have pitied me. Do you think you could?" and Sophy was appealed to with such a tender yet delighted countenance, that she felt it would be neither easy nor prudent to express any pity.

"I don't know why I should," said she looking at her fan.

"You don't know why you should?" said Lord Stoketon following her eyes to the fan. "You don't know why? Then shall I tell you? Will you let me tell you?" Lord Stoketon, your *vis à vis* is waiting for you! You must go through your figure, and Sophy Grey is saved for the present. The act of dancing sobered him a little, and he forgot that he was on the point of telling what could not be told without

leading to another little question, and another little answer.

If Mrs. Grey had been by, how would she have reprobated the figure which obliged young men to leave their partners! How would she have wondered that it was not better contrived! that it was not left out!

“Are Mr. and Mrs. Grey, and your sister, here?” said Lord Stoketon as he returned to his place. “I shall be so glad to see them all again!”

“They are all here,” said Sophy. “Oh! there is Anne, dancing in the next set!—do you see?—with a tall dark person, close to that girl with red ribbons in her hair; (what extraordinary figures one sees at a country ball!) There! Anne is looking this way: I am sure she sees you.”

“Yes,” and Lord Stoketon smiled so broadly that Anne must have seen, and she certainly

did, for she smiled again, and looked surprised; and then they saw her answering a question of her tall partner's and Lord Stoketon turned again to Sophy.

“ You live near here, Miss Grey ? ” said he.

“ Only four miles off.”

“ Only four miles ! ” in a joyful tone. “ How long do you stay at Hilton ? ”

“ Two days more.”

“ I wish they would think of asking me there for two nights : what do you think, Miss Grey ? Do you think I could be thought an acquisition ? ” laughing. “ No, I see you don't ; but do introduce me if you can, I can but try my chance. Are there any daughters ? Heaven grant there are some Miss Cunninghams ! ”

“ Why ? ” said Sophy, not quite liking he should be so anxious.

“ Why, do not you see, if by a lucky accident

there are any, and they are old or ugly or partnerless, I have nothing to do but to beg ‘papa and mania’ to introduce me, to one or all, and then Hilton is mine ! They would be brutes not to invite me.”

“Well,” said Sophy, all her unpleasant feeling vanished, “You may be quite satisfied on that point, for there are no less than three Miss Cunninghams, all dull and plain, and wishing for partners. But I shall pity you if you go through the duties of quadrille with all three.”

“What a nuisance,” exclaimed Lord Stoke-ton. “The music has stopped ! Those people must have left out half the figure. I am sure they did that once or twice before. You will introduce me then to the Cunninghams, Miss Grey ? pray do not forget : you do not know how anxious I am to beat Hilton the next two days.” This was said too tenderly to require an answer, and Sophy was saved the trouble of

an extraneous remark by seeing her brother approach ; and as William came up, an introduction took place between himself and Lord Stoketon. “ Why, in the name of patience, am I to be bored with Lord Stoketon ! ” thought William, who had just been persuaded by his mother that he ought to dance with one of the Miss Cunninghams. Lord Stoketon and Sophy went in search of Mr. and Mrs. Grey, and Mrs. Grey was so surprised and delighted as she saw him approach, that she was almost betrayed into calling him her “ dear Lord Stoketon.”

It was impossible that he could bear to resign Sophy to the chaperonage of “ mama,” and the risk of another partner, so “ she must find Mr. and Mrs. Cunningham for him ; ” and they walked round and round the room, and every second turn were surprised they did not find those for whom they had forgotten to look. At last Sophy felt that she had walked long enough

with Lord Stoketon, and then,—it was very strange,—but Mr. and Mrs. Cunningham were found directly ; and the introduction took place to the evident satisfaction of the Cunninghams. As Lord Stoketon took Miss Grey back to her seat, he whispered something about what he would go through for her sake ; and Sophy's blush had not subsided when she returned to her mother.

Mrs. Grey thought she never had felt so happy before, and that there never was so charming a young man as Lord Stoketon ! She frowned off a young man who was evidently looking that way, wrapped up “ dear Sophy ” in her boa, for fear she should catch cold, and advised her to sit still next dance. Lord Stoketon was invited to Weston and gave a joyful assent, and thought, in his heart, that there never was a better tempered, more kind hearted woman than Mrs. Grey.

The ball at length was over—the last waltz

had been waltzed—the last quadrille walked through. Some, there were, who thought it the longest—some the shortest ball that ever was given—some who felt sure of a bad night from pleasure—some who felt sure of a bad night from disappointment—some who felt neither pleasure nor pain, but were glad it was over before four o'clock, as that was exactly the hour which ensured them a head-ach.

The cloaks and shawls were found, Sophy had the pleasure of hearing good Mrs. Cunningham hoping and wishing that Lord Stoketon would come to Hilton for a few days; apologizing and grieving over “a small room”—“quite ashamed of offering”—“hoped he would excuse;” and then Lord Stoketon’s ready, joyous acceptance—his assurances that he “always preferred a small room.” “The point is gained!” whispered he to Sophy, as he put on her cloak. “Thank goodness, I may see you to-morrow, and not go home a poor miserable wretch as I

feared ! Did you hear the old lady ? so apologetic ! I did it well, did not I ? I hope you will not catch cold,” as the door opened and the cold night air blew in. “ Don’t come out Lord Stoke-ton,” vociferated Mrs. Grey : “ don’t come out on any account ! I am so sorry we cannot take you home.” “ Thank you,” said he, not giving up Sophy’s arm till he had brought her to the carriage steps, and then “ Good-night Miss Grey,” and the hand was offered : Miss Grey’s was put out ; and it was taken and pressed.

When in the carriage, Mrs. Grey could no longer repress her delight.

“ My dear,” said she to Sophy, “ he is handsomer than ever ! ”

No one had ever called Lord Stoketon handsome before.

“ Do you think so ? ” said Sophy, in an assenting tone.

“ He is more attentive than ever ! ” whispered Anne to her.

It was nearly dark, Sophy took hold of the hand that rested near her, carried it to her lips, and kissed it, and Anne knew that Sophy was not indifferent to Lord Stoketon.

Mrs. Grey talked incessantly, the whole way home, ejaculating over and over again—"I am so pleased—I'm so glad we have seen him again!" but she could get very little conversation from her companions. Mr. Grey was usually silent in a carriage: Sophy had much to think of—much to enjoy. Anne had much to think of, too—much to feel—much to delight her, yet, as her hand was raised to Sophy's lips,—as she received that tacit avowal that Sophy loved Lord Stoketon, will it be thought strange if, as her hand was released again, the tears filled her eyes? They filled to overflowing—and Anne was roused from her mingled and busy train of thoughts and emotions, by the tear which dropped on her hand.

She started, and almost wondered at herself that she should weep where all was joy!—when her wishes were realized! Yet who that has known a sister's love, who that has passed from childhood to womanhood, hand in hand, and heart to heart, with one only sister, — who, that has grown as she grew—ripened as she ripened into intelligence and beauty—felt, each year, the added sweetness of that tie, as feelings, sentiments, and intelligence increased into perfection — Who that has entrusted every care, sorrow, joy, and hope, and been trusted in return, will not also have felt that there are tears to be mingled with those smiles, regrets to be blended with that happiness, when first we know and hear that the sister of our home, our bosom, our affection, is leaving us for a new home, for a tie still dearer? Home — the sweet hours of confidence, — the pure kiss of sisterly love, — the

joint room,—the fire-light talk,—the laugh,—the smile,—the tear — All are over ! and loved though she still may be — happy though she ought to be, and *is* in her sister's happiness, loving and esteeming the new relation, who so loves her sister, still let her weep ! It must be so : — it must be that she feels, though scarcely sorrow, yet regret

And so Anne felt, and thoughts like these passed through her mind, as her sister's hand unclasped her own — as the gentle pressure was withdrawn. Days gone by rushed through her mind : — the sunny hour — the summer ramble — the fire-side talk — the falling tears — the infectious laugh — the kind “ good night ! ” all crowded on her mind ! No wonder that the tears should fall — yes, let them fall — yes, Anne Grey, weep now as that first link in the chain of youth is broken ! Weep, now and oh ! that in after years you may not weep

again more bitter tears, as you think of that hour when, over your unsullied heart, your light, unbroken spirit, came the first sign that the link was severed—that child-like joys and morning gladness in their first freshness were departing. Yes, and let her weep—the young light-hearted being who leaves her home, her father's house, the glad looks, the kind tones of parents, sisters, brothers. Yes, let her weep too, for adore and love and cherish as her husband may, yet can he not give back such love as theirs;—yet can he not restore the hours of youth and innocence, the father's blessing and the mother's care. No—let us weep for her, for them. Life is before her now unveiled. The beautiful, the bright romance is at an end, and she has waked to grieve awhile, — to mourn,—to struggle—and to die !

Something of all this must have been felt, as Anne and Sophy found themselves alone in

their room that night. Many questions were to be asked by Anne; much to be related by Sophy, Lord Stoketon had said a great deal—there was no longer a doubt.

“Yes, Anne,” said she, as she stood musing over the fire, her long hair unloosed and falling down her shoulders, the ball dress thrown off, and the dressing-gown substituted, “yes Anne, it soon will be decided! Sophy Grey will be no more! and—” she could not go on: she bent over the mantle-piece and burst into tears. Anne’s arm was thrown round her; her gentle voice enquiring if she were unhappy, yet feeling that she might weep without sorrow.

“Dearest Sophy,” said Anne, “is there anything more than the hurry—the agitation—?”

“No, no,” said Sophy, raising her head, and trying to laugh, “no, no, it is only that I am foolish. I am very happy! I ought to be! Indeed I am, dear Anne; but somehow, it is so

new, and I did not expect to see him; and to leave you Anne!"—the tears were beginning to flow again: she put her arms round Anne's neck and kissed her, and Anne cried too—and then—they could smile again. They talked, and still talked, till the smile became a laugh, and Sophy could think how pleasant it would be to be a chaperon, and take Anne out, and have a house of her own; and she could fall asleep and sleep so soundly that she did not awake till the lady's maid had twice said "it's getting very late ma'am."

But Anne could not sleep, or if she did, it was a sort of half-sleep, and the morning sun found her vainly trying to determine whether Lord Stoketon would be satisfied without dancing the next dance with Sophy, or whether the musicians meant to go back to their places, instead of walking about the room with their instruments — or whether, after all, they were not Lord Stoketon and not the musicians.

“It’s getting very late, ma’am,” decided the question ; and Anne, after vainly trying to save Sophy from being disturbed, arose, and she, and her sister were soon dressed. Sophy looked gay and blooming as ever ; Anne a little more pale, and yet, may I say it, not less pretty than when on the preceding evening she had called forth the admiration of Mr. George Foley : for bright and dazzling though the ball attire may be—fairy-like and brilliant, yet there is a softer charm in the quiet simplicity of the morning costume, at least so thought George Foley, as Sophy and Anne entered the breakfast room. “If she was lovely last night,” thought he, “she is still more so now. I like to see a woman in her home dress—her home simplicity. It is a greater test.”

“Robert Dodson will make such a good husband for Charlotte?” thought Mrs. Grey, that morning, as she looked at Anne and George

Foley, the latter of whom was intently listening to all Anne would say, whilst she seemed quite contented to talk to him.

“How pleasant it is,” thought good, affectionate Mrs. Grey, “to see one’s children so much liked ! I’m sure I never thought Anne a beauty before !” “Mr. Grey,” said she, when they were alone, “what a pleasing young man Mr. George Foley is ! I suppose he will have a very large fortune on his father’s death. I should suppose Mr. Foley is by no means a young man.”

“As his son has a very large allowance, my dear, we will not kill him just yet,” replied Mr. Grey.

CHAPTER XVII.

LORD Stoketon arrived just in time for dinner. He was cordially greeted by the Cunninghams. William Grey had had a little hint from his mother to be very good friends with him, so he asked him before dinner as they stood together over the fire, if he did not think Miss Cunningham very ugly, and having received an affirmative shrug in reply, he thought he had done his duty—looked triumphantly at his mother, and seated himself in an arm chair, wondering

what on earth the Cunninghams could ask people to their house for!

During the evening Lord Stoketon was very agreeable; at least so thought Sophy and Mrs. Grey; so thought Mrs. Cunningham and several others. He was in high spirits and talked and rattled away, and as conversation was general he had no opportunity to devote himself exclusively to Sophy. His time was well employed in talking to Mrs. Grey, and to Mrs. Cunningham, taking bets from Sir Arthur Vincent, and looking at Sophy every minute that could be spared from listening to Mrs. Cunningham's speeches (which he did not hear), or attending to Mrs. Grey's happy, chatty talk, of which he only knew the end and the beginning. He said "beautiful," to a drawing of Miss Cunningham's; declared he had never heard anything so charming as a song from Miss Arabella; and actually turned over the leaves of Miss

Mary's music book, as she waded through her air 'con variazioni.' It was not quite at the right moment, it is true, but Sophy saved him from turning over in the middle of a difficult passage. He had stood ten minutes listening to a new story of Sir Henry Poynton's; he had wondered how James John Cunningham, Esq., could get through all the business he had on his hands,—looked seriously aware that a member for a county was a great and responsible character; and in short—Lord Stoketon was very agreeable!

Still no happy recess, no whist or *écarte* party, no lively talkers ensured the quiet, private conversation. The room was a large square room—furnished in a large square style: no one could retire to a quiet unobtrusive sofa or table, and hope to escape observation. A lamp was stuck in every corner: a table scrupulously pushed as near as possible to the wall;

a *chaise longue* before it; a round table in the middle of the room and a piano forte with its length against the wall, well lighted and conspicuous. Lord Stoketon watched Sophy out of the room at night, and wondered why people went to bed so early, for he was still manœuvring for a little private conversation; and Sophy went up stairs thinking she need not have been so much alarmed at the idea of his coming to Hilton, for after all there was nothing so very particular in his manner.

The next day was not more propitious to Lord Stoketon. The ladies were all expected to be very desirous of paying their respects to two or three neighbours of the Cunninghams, who were rather nearer to them than to the Greys. It seemed quite unthought of that any gentleman should make one of the heavy coach and civility party; so the ladies were to be pleased, and anxious to see their acquaintance.

and quite satisfied that nothing was so charming as making the agreeable to one another all the morning in a carriage. The gentlemen of the party were expected to be very desirous of the advantage of an excellent day's shooting, and it could have scarcely been believed that any one of the number who was neither old, rheumatic, nor gouty, could fail to think it the only possible occupation for the morning.

So Sophy, with a little frown, put on her pretty bonnet at the glass, resigned to the long female drive, to call on people she could see any day she pleased, and never cared to see; and Lord Stoketon put on his shooting jacket, and, against all etiquette, brought his gun into the drawing-room, just to see whether Miss Grey looked sorry he was going—to say a few last words, and to keep all the party waiting and wondering where he was.

However, he consoled himself by thinking

he would get back in time for that delightful hour for conversation, that proverbial moment for a coze, the dusky, fire-light hour before the dressing bell has sounded.

Lord Stoketon did get back in excellent time; he hurried into the drawing-room in the happy anticipation of finding Sophy there, of seeing her blush and look surprised and pleased at his early return; but alas! Lord Stoketon did not calculate on the at-homeness and agreeableness of Mrs. Cunningham's neighbours; and the slow pace of Mr. Cunningham's horses. When he entered the drawing-room in eager expectation, nothing met his eye but a forlorn deserted looking room! the fire almost extinct — the window open. It was quite evident that the party were not returned.

A door was heard. Lord Stoketon listened. "Perhaps they are come," thought he.

The door opened, and enter, not Miss Grey,

not Mrs. Cunningham—but the footman, having recollected at last that there was, or ought to be, a fire.

“Are the ladies come back?” asked Lord Stoketon.

“No, my Lord.”

“Do you think they will be back soon?”

“I don’t know, my Lord, but they’re seldom back till dressing time;”—and the footman, relinquishing the hope of making the fire burn without a candle, sticks, and brown paper, left the room.

“How provoking!” ejaculated Lord Stoketon. “Hang that old woman! Did she think I came here to be sent out shooting all the morning, and ‘o talk to her all the evening!”

If any of you have ever been in love—have walked home from shooting at twice your usual pace—have outwitted master of the house, dogs, and game-keepers, all for one particular ob-

ject—have come home and found yourself outwitted — your object lost—then you will not think that Lord Stoketon was an ill-tempered man, because his good-humour failed him when he found a cold deserted drawing-room, and no Sophy Grey, on his return from shooting at Hilton.

The footman's prediction was verified.—The ladies did not come home till dressing-time. Lord Stoketon met them in the hall—looked as cross as he could at Mrs. Cunningham—and said to Sophy,—“How late you are! I have been back this hour!”

Sophy ought to have been flattered, and gone into a rage with Mrs. Cunningham too; but I don't know whether she did or not.

Equally unpropitious was the evening.—Lord Stoketon, poor man! was actually forced to play at whist. His good-nature was so forcibly worked upon that he could not refuse,

and, giving a despairing look towards Sophy, who was laughing and talking to Sir Arthur Vincent with provoking happiness, he sat down, ruined his partner, and made the fortune of his opponents.

Anne and George Foley had been more fortunate than Sophy and Lord Stoketon. They had, it is true, been separated as irrevocably during the day; but they had sat together at dinner, and Anne had begun to think Mr. Foley very agreeable and sensible, and to look on it as a matter of course that he should come and talk to her whenever there was an opportunity. Next to Edward Temple she thought him the pleasantest person of her acquaintance. She hardly knew, indeed, how to compare the two—for she felt so differently towards them. She felt perfectly at her ease with George Foley—so much as she might have felt with a brother, or a cousin; and she talked to him

whenever there was time for it, smiled when she found him by her at dinner, and never thought that he or any one else could draw any inference from her doing so—never thought that Mrs. Grey had already calculated the length of time that would elapse before his proposal—speculated whether she and Sophy should be married on the same day—and doubted whether it would be better not, as there was an idea of its being unlucky!—Never thought that the Miss Cunninghams said “what a flirt Miss Anne Grey is! Mama would never let us behave as she does. So quiet, too, with it! as if she did not know what she was doing.”—Never thought that George Foley himself believed she could not be quite unconscious of his admiration—never thought he had owned to himself that he loved her.

No, Anne Grey! how was it possible you should think this? How was it possible you

should see that his eyes were always upon you—that the colour sometimes rose when you spoke to him—that delight was in his face when you smiled as he drew near—that he was negligent to all the world but you—that he listened to the sound of your voice—that he tried to solve your opinions—to find out your sentiments—to tell you his own—to be delighted if they concurred with yours—to listen with his eyes fixed on you when you sung—to look sad when you spoke to any but him? In short, Anne Grey, we all know you have no acuteness in discovering your own powers of attraction!

So Anne Grey sat, happily self-deceived that evening with George Foley by her side, never dreaming that the Miss Cunninghams were watching her—that Mrs. Grey was peeping at her, from behind her “four by honours,” or that any one could be thinking about her.

They had been talking (an appropriate subject) of agreeableness.

“Do you know Edward Temple?” said George Foley.

Anne assented, but with a little start.

“He is, perhaps, one of the most agreeable people one knows,” continued George Foley.

“He has promised to come to us at Chatterton this month. He is often with us,” added he.

“Indeed!” said Anne.

It was just that joyous happy “indeed” which follows the intelligence of something unexpected, yet pleasant. It made George Foley look at her; but he gained nothing by the scrutiny.

“I should think they would ask us to meet him sometimes, or he will come to see us,” thought she; and she smiled before she knew that George Foley was observing her. She looked up and caught his eye. He quickly with-

drew it. Anne coloured. He wished he could have asked why she had smiled?

The next morning 'good byes' were uttered, and Lord Stoketon had said to Sophy—"Miss Grey, you must expect to see me at Weston—Mr. and Mrs. Grey have both been so kind as to invite me. You will not make me repent my impatience to come?" added he—"You will not look cold and distant?"

There was no time for more to be said; the good byes were all uttered, and Sophy must follow her mother, who had lingered as long as she possibly could, and one more 'good bye,' and again Sophy Grey was separated from Lord Stoketon.

And now must we pause here? In the generality of novels, when a hero is separated from a heroine, it calls forth a long train of retrospect and reflection—Many new ideas are started—many original sentiments expressed—

much that is very instructive is drawn from that interesting fact, that the hero has parted from the heroine. Much of his former life and character is then exposed to our view. We find that he has been unfortunate; that he has formed a lasting and heart-harrowing attachment before his admission to school; that he is a disappointed man; that he has a father whom no one knows whether he is to be heir to or not; that he is handsome, clever, agreeable, fastidious, generous, brave, open-hearted, a poet, a genius, a saver of the lives of unfortunate children who fall into the water, an owner of a magnificent Newfoundland dog, a passionate admirer of Byron, a *roué*, *blasé* with the world—and, in short, a hero.

All this we learn on the first separation from our heroine, to whom we are led to believe he is not indifferent. Much, too, do we learn of her; that she is lovely as she is amiable—sen-

sitive as she is lovely, and, like a gentle flower, shrinking and retiring from all, but from the eye of our *roué* of a hero.

They are separated a second time, and then we find that fondest hopes decay—that the life of man is short at the longest—that every thing in this world is uncertain—that our expectations are never realized—that our hopes are always disappointed—and a great deal more, which is all so interesting and true, that the reader never attempts to doubt or deny it, but sighs and wipes away a tear, and thinks ‘what a charming book it is!’

Lord Stoketon is separated from Sophy Grey! Must I then pause? This would be *selon les règles*; but even a separation between a hero and a heroine is too common-place a circumstance to call for any pause in my unromantic every-day-life story. I cannot moralize on so slight an occasion.—I must take my heroine

quietly home, and leave Lord Stoketon to think with rational, calculating soberness, how many weeks will elapse before he sees her again.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CHARLOTTE Daventry returned home a short time before the rest of the party. She was ready to receive them, to look, and to say how glad she was to see them again, to make them feel what an affectionate warm-hearted girl she was, and to give to each the impression that she was peculiarly happy in their own peculiar return ;—to make even William say to himself, “ she certainly has the finest eyes I ever saw.”

Charlotte had liked her visit, as she said, “very well. Oh! quite as well as she could like it! They were very kind. Dear Lady Dowton was so kind! but still she did not feel happy without them. She had wished for them so often! She had thought of Sophy all the day of the ball. She had wondered whether Anne’s singing had been as much admired as it ought to be!” and then, when alone with Sophy, she was ready to hear all about Lord Stoketon; to ask with eagerness whether she had met him, and to get up and dance round the room when she heard that he had actually been there. To listen, and laugh, and half cry; and call her, her dear, dear Sophy—her dear beautiful Lady Stoketon!

Charlotte was ready also to listen to Anne, as they sat alone together in her room in the twilight hour—that hour of confidence and unreserve, which has seen the unfolding of many a tale, the revealing of many a secret,

which, as it came to light, made bright and cheerful even the duskiuess, and dulness of that hour ! She was ready to sympathise with her, to forestal the expression of those feelings of sorrow that mingled with her joy.

“ Dear Anne,” said she, as she pressed her hand, “ how well I can enter into your more serious feelings. Sophy is too light and volatile — too heartless ” — she checked herself, “ too light hearted to feel seriously—to know those strong regrets, which others perhaps might feel, when she is probably about to leave you ;—to leave a sister whose love has been perfect, so much greater than was called for—than could be reciprocated !—that is,” — she blushed and checked herself once more ; but it was but for a moment, and then again, as if carried on by her feelings, she continued. “ And yet, dear Anne, there is one reason for joy in the prospect of Sophy’s marriage ! one reason which few perhaps will feel—none per-

haps but I alone ! *you* never could ! *you*, I am sure, would not !—but I—forgive me Anne ! I know that *your* forgiveness must be asked, though not with most others placed in your situation would it be necessary to seek forgiveness. But who are like you ? No, dearest Anne,” said she, her voice becoming more clear and expressive ; each word dropping out marked, clear, distinct, yet low ; “ no dearest Anne ! none but you would need to be asked forgiveness for speaking to them of their own merits ! none but you at this moment would not rejoice, *selfishly* rejoice, that the sister for whom she, the superior, the forbearing, the high - minded, had been neglected, should be removed ! that that sister should no longer remain a blind before her merits ! and that Anne Grey should not for ever be forgotten ! that she might at least have a chance no longer to be coldly loved, because a gay,

thoughtless, selfish—yes, the truth will out—a vain, presuming, yet good-hearted girl, was her elder sister—was placed in every thing above her, and was by her, so unselfishly, so purely loved, that she could not see her fault—could not believe that this sister was too highly appreciated, while she herself was not appreciated at all! Anne Grey I know will still be blind. Then must her friends—then must those who truly love her, rejoice, that she will be no longer undervalued. Then must I, the poor forlorn and ignorant orphan girl! I alone—the dependent on their bounty!—I alone must then rejoice!”

She stopped, her voice had become faltering and trembling with agitation. It had risen as she had spoken the last words. It had risen with her feelings—and at length those feelings had overpowered her utterance—they had overpowered herself.

She stopped almost abruptly. She seemed half-alarmed at what she had said. She looked at Anne, whose surprise and emotion had kept her silent. Her eyes, which had sparkled, almost flashed, with animation as she spoke, now sunk into quietness—into an expression of contrition—of almost childish shame and bashfulness as she looked at her cousin. The colour came to her face, and she sat for a moment silent and ashamed, looking more like the frightened child who knows it has been naughty, than the grown up responsible being, who had just been uttering thoughts and emotions in such a voice, and with such an expression as hers.

Anne could not speak. A tumult of mingled feelings took away all power of utterance. But Charlotte Daventry was silent but for an instant; and when she spoke again, the Charlotte Daventry who had just been declaiming as it were with such eloquent enthusiasm—that

Charlotte Daventry was gone! the simple, youthful, childish Charlotte Daventry alone was there.

She looked up at Anne; half smiled; yet still looked ashamed. "Oh! what must you think of me!" said she, "Oh! what must you think of me! Indeed I did not know what I was saying. Perhaps I felt all I said; that you know," and she sighed — "one cannot always help; but—I would not have said—and yet after all I do not remember! I don't know what there was. I don't know why I should not!—But I see you are angry, dear, dear Anne!" and she put her hand on her shoulder, "I see you are; you look so grave—so sorry!"

"No, indeed," said Anne, "I have no right to be angry; but I was surprised. Indeed, dear Charlotte," said she after a moment's pause, "I think we had better not talk any more on this subject. I do not wish it: but I am not angry."

“Thank you” said Charlotte, quietly, “you are very kind;” and she said no more, for she saw that Anne was in earnest in her wish, and that she looked grave and distressed.

For a moment Charlotte turned her head away. The smile—the dark peculiar smile was on her lips. “Does the serpent sting? Father! you see, you know it does!” and the smile was brighter for a moment, and then her face was once more turned towards her cousin, and the smile was gone; the simple, childish girl, half sorry, half afraid, alone was there.

“Can it be,” thought Anne, as she mused that night over what had passed. “Can it be that there are moments when her imagination is too much excited? When her intellects—but no! Oh no! It cannot be! It is too horrible! I cannot understand it. I will not try. Sophy perhaps is vain—a little vain,” thought she, as she mused again a short time after,

“She is perhaps a little selfish—and perhaps they do not love me—they do not understand me.” She struggled to repress her feelings, as she half groaned with a pang—a new and bitter sensation she had never known but once before, and then not in all its bitterness; but once before when Charlotte Daventry had so spoken, had hinted “what perhaps,” thought Anne, “should not have been spoken—should not have been hinted. But why do I think of it? Why not remain unconscious and happy,” (and never had the word happiness given her such a pang as at that moment.) “Why not remain unconscious and happy as I used to be? No she should not—she ought not to have spoken thus: and yet,” thought she, checking herself, “why do I blame her? How can I? She is so simple, I should almost say ignorant. She knows so little what she is doing—the harm—the misery she is causing! She is so carried away by her

warmth of heart — her impulses ! or by some childish fancy. I dare say she forgets it as soon as it is spoken ; and why should I then remember and allow to weigh upon my mind, that which was uttered alone from caprice, or by accident, which the person herself forgets to feel as soon as uttered, or which perhaps she never feels. But her manner, her voice, her eloquence to day—what was it ? What could it have been ?— Oh ! that I had never heard it ! Oh ! that it would not keep recurring to my mind, and sounding in my ears ! Oh ! that I could forget it ! Forget ! Oh yes ! and why should I not ? Do not they all love me ? Do I not have all the affection bestowed to make me happy ? And my dear father ! can she say that *he* does not love me sufficiently : that Henry does not ? She cannot mean that : no it is impossible !—And yet perhaps before her—perhaps in speaking of me.” She sighed heavily. “ But no, I do not

think it!—and Sophy, dear, dear Sophy: she said that she could not feel, that she was selfish! Do not I know that she does feel—that she did?—Yes, yes!” her eyes brightening with the thought, “yes, yes, Charlotte did not see her; Charlotte did not know that Sophy wept with me, that she shed tears because she thought of leaving me, of leaving home. Yes, dear Sophy! when you took my hand and raised it to your lips—when I felt your warm kiss upon it—do you think that then I did not know that you could feel—that you *did* feel? Did I not know that you loved me? and when she cried that night, was it not because she thought of leaving us—was not her emotion caused by affection—by right feeling? Yes, yes, dearest sister, dearest Sophy, she wrongs you. And yet,” thought she, after a moment’s reflection, “how soundly she slept—how soon forgotten—and once,”—Anne blushed to remember

such a thing—yet she did remember it—“once that next morning, she must have forgotten, for how angrily she spoke!” Yes, Charlotte Daventry, it is enough! The serpent has stung! Your work is begun.

*

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